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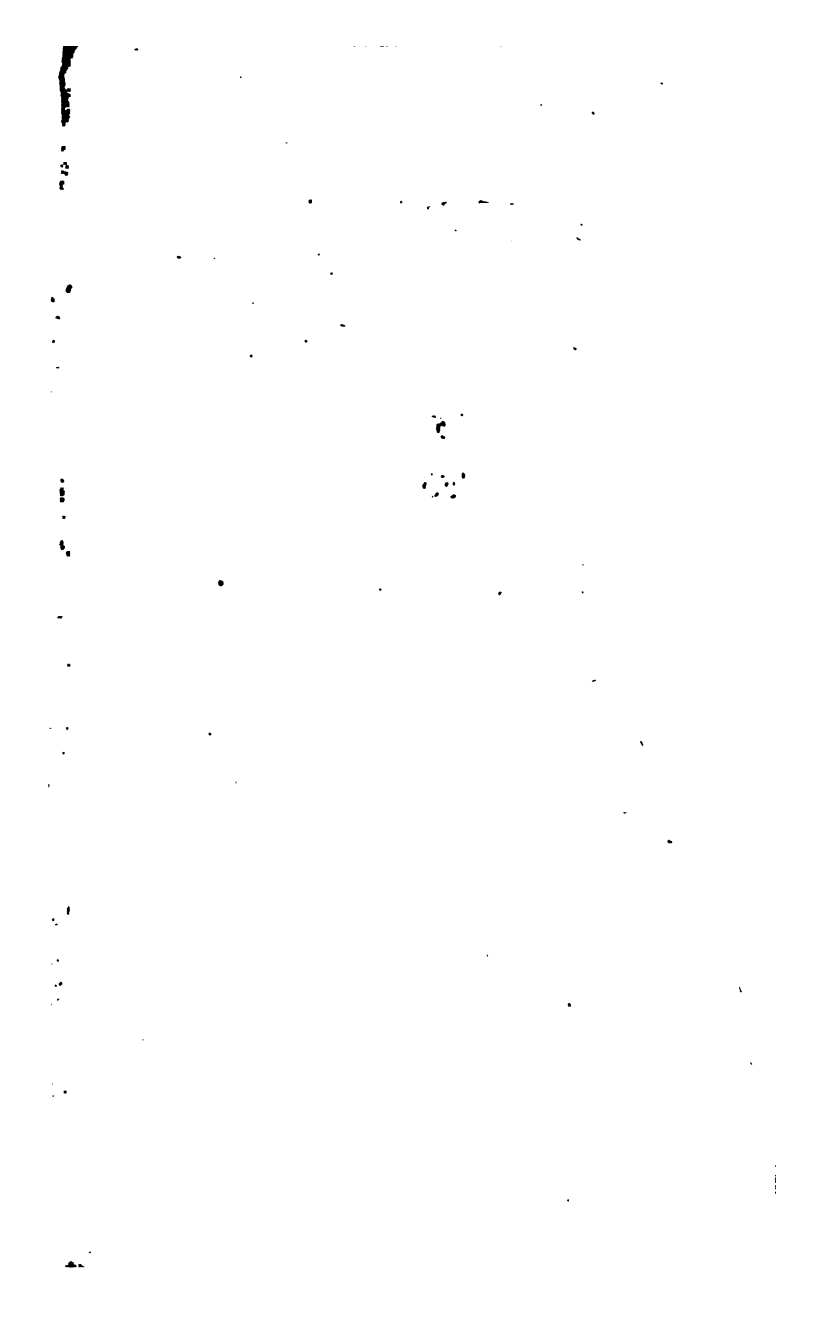
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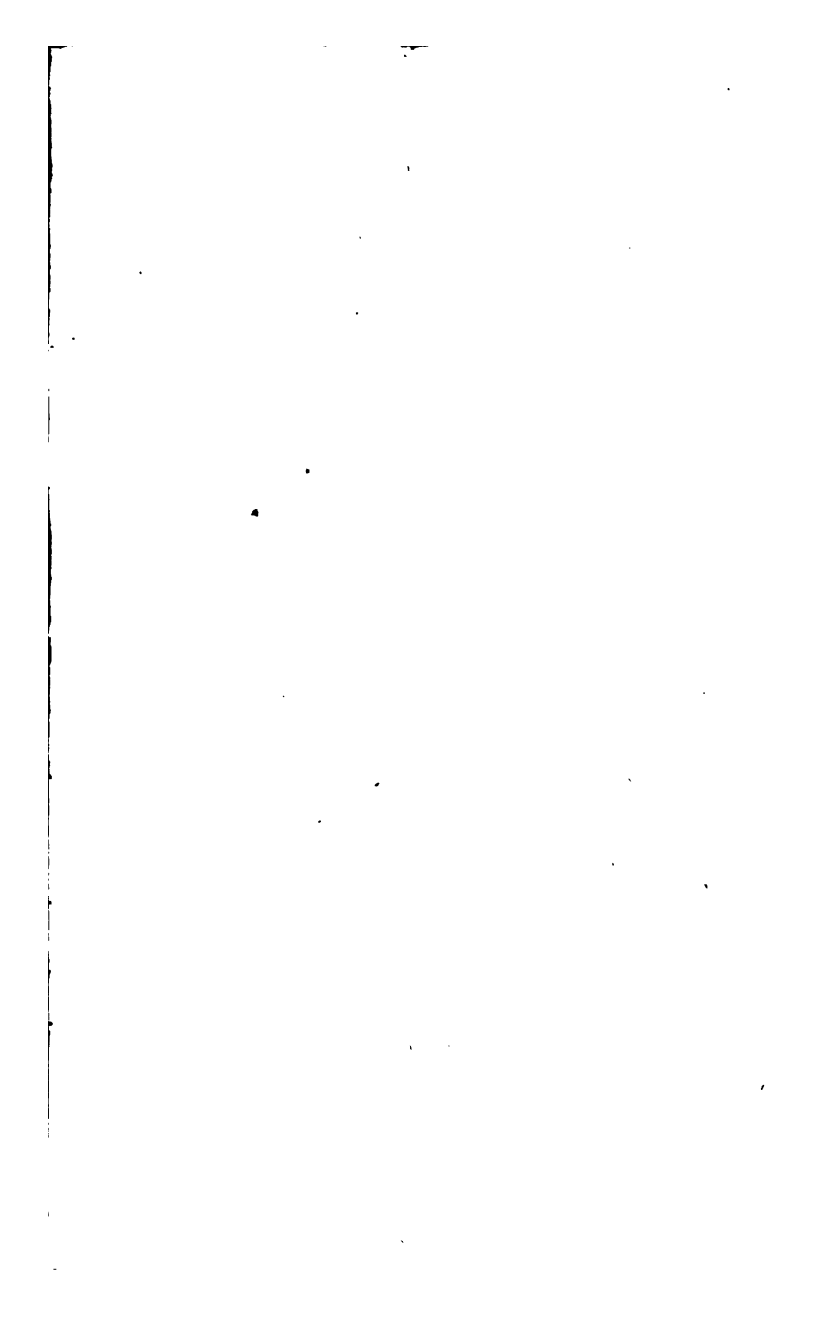
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THE
ITINERARY
OF A
TRAVELLER IN THE WILDERNESS.

Taylor and Green, Printers, 1, Rood Lane, Fenchurch Street.



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S. Freeman sculp.

—the desire of their eyes is taken away.

page 23.

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THE
ITINERARY

OF A
TRAVELLER IN THE WILDERNESS;

ADDRESSED
TO THOSE WHO ARE PERFORMING THE
SAME JOURNEY.

BY MRS. TAYLOR,
Of Ougar;
AUTHOR OF "MATERNAL SOLICITUDE," &c. &c.



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INTRODUCTION.

The wilderness hath shut them in.

EXODUS, chap. xiv, ver. 3.

WHY do I not repose beneath the soft shade of unwithering foliage, feasting on delicious fruits, and sipping pure draughts from the crystal brook that runs meandering by? Why am I urged forward, a traveller still, with all a traveller's privations and dangers? or why, if travel I must, have I not an even path, securely fenced on either side, and well provided with refreshments for the way-faring and the weary? Why is it thus? Ah! there is a tale, which, although often told, as often dies disregarded on the ear, and leaves individuals, however assenting to its gene-

ral application, especially marvelling at their own lot. The paternal inheritance forfeited by their ancestors, for certain misdeeds which they had done, each one seems obstinately disposed to reclaim in his own right, although daily experience proves the inefficacy, as well as the criminality of such endeavours; for a flaming sword now guards the entrance to these forfeited possessions, and there remains no alternative, but to travel onward through a dreary wilderness: yet with the sure prospect of a fairer inheritance beyond it, for those who pursue the direct road, however dangerous or toilsome the journey may prove.

Stranger, have you not long ere this found out that you are but a traveller, and a traveller too in a wilderness? and shall you marvel thereat? Shall you expect to find the ground you tread blessed, which for man's sake is pronounced to be cursed, and which denies its increase, but to the sweat of our brow? What fruit do you expect from the thorns and the

thistles, which spring up in your path? 'Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?' Yet, a creature pronounced to be of dust, and to that dust returning, presumes to take up his rest here as though it were his final destination! Behold them dancing around their idols of every shape, reared aloft in all directions, and exclaiming 'Our mountain stands strong; we shall never be moved'—'to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.' While others are standing at the door of their tents, murmuring against the Lord, and against his servants: or sitting beneath their withered gourds, exclaiming, 'We do well to be angry'—'our soul is weary because of the way.' Some, too, anxiously waiting the accomplishment of a darling project or scheme, upbraid the slow progress of time, and impatiently count the tedious days and hours; unconscious how those fleeting days, those winged hours, curtail the short span of that life in which are concentrated all their hopes, and to which

therefore they so fondly cling. Their views are bounded by the horizon of this wilderness, and beyond it they have no desire to pry, no ambition to explore: they feel themselves urged on from stage to stage; yet gladly would they retrace their steps and recommence their journey, whatever unknown perils may infest the path, and in full view of all its inevitable woes.

Into what an inhospitable region did the Sovereign Lord and Saviour of mankind descend, for the recovery of a lost and guilty world! Of all the tents spread abroad on the surface of this wilderness, it was amongst the meanest and the most humble that he obtained shelter; and oftentimes even these were closed against him, so that 'he had not where to lay his head.' Yet here he sojourned, till the arduous work which he came to perform was completed; that work, the design of which was 'to turn men from their dumb idols, around which we behold them assembling, to serve the living God;' to destroy the love of the world; to

supply the place of the withered gourd, by a covert which shall effectually defend against every storm of adversity ; to teach us to number our days, that instead of forgetting their speed, or wishing to live them over again, we may apply our hearts unto wisdom, and thereby wean our affections from this wilderness to which we are so fondly attached, and from which, with all its woes, we are so reluctant to depart ; to fix our affections on things above, where this Divine Benefactor, after all his toils and sufferings on our account, now lives, and where it is his will and pleasure that the people of his love, whom he purchased at so dear a rate, should live also.

Happy those children of his love who have learned the true character of this wilderness, through which they are at present doomed to travel, and who, instead of taking up their rest here, account themselves but pilgrims and strangers, seeking a better country. If any among the multitudes that we meet, these, and these

only, are the people who can justly estimate the various events that befall them, who understand the true nature of prosperity and of adversity, and who, as far as they are able, smooth the path, and render it safe and pleasant to their fellow-travellers, as well as to those who shall hereafter follow their footsteps, in the way to the heavenly Canaan. Numberless are the perils and trials of this inhospitable wilderness, which cannot be averted by human foresight, or human skill; but they are needlessly multiplied, by those which mankind unnecessarily invent for each other. Let not us, fellow-traveller, add to the sad catalogue: rather, in the hope of mitigating some of these evils, let us indulge such reflections as the scenes around may suggest, and thereby endeavour to regulate our future conduct, for the benefit of ourselves, and the good of others.

THE ITINERARY, &c.

No. I.

There was not a house in which there was not one dead.

EXODUS, chap. xii, ver. 30.

WHEN the king of terrors has his commission to enter a dwelling, although it should not be that of a near relative or valued friend, the solemn event naturally diffuses an awe over our minds; and at least impresses our spirits with a transient gloom: but if, ere this impression is erased, the stroke is repeated in another quarter, the lesson comes home with additional force and solemnity. At certain seasons, indeed, the grim tyrant is busied in his work of destruction; and then especially it is, that, with increasing solicitude, we watch his progress, not knowing

at which of us his next stroke may be levelled : for when general sickness, the harbinger of death, extends its ravages from house to house, then it is that our dormant feelings are aroused, and mortal man feels himself to be, what in the midst of health, and life, and prosperity, he had almost forgotten that he was — a creature of dust, ready to crumble away, and mingle with his mother earth, at the summons of Him, ‘ who sendeth man to destruction, and sayeth, Return, ye children of men.’

But how can we adequately realise the terrors of that memorable night, when all the first-born of the devoted land of Egypt were cut off by the destroying angel ! In how many families were parent and child alike devoted to the common ruin ! The father, if unhappily the first-born of his house, must obey the imperious summons, along with that son who might have stood in the gap, to defend and protect his orphan brethren ; while many a mother, in the like case, must be torn from her tender charge, and descend

with her first born to the cold mansions of the dead ! At the birth of these devoted victims to divine vengeance, how would the accustomed demonstrations of joy have been changed into mourning, and sackcloth and ashes, had these awful events of futurity been disclosed to their view ! Happy for them, happy for us, that they are kept concealed ; and the traveller passes on, unconscious what enemy may be lurking in his path, awaiting its commission to attack him.

O ! how far and how wide did this calamity extend ; in what various directions did it cut in sunder, in one hour, the tenderest and the dearest ties of human life, extending its ravages even to the cattle in the field, and evincing to what a degree the whole creation groaneth under the bitter effects of man's rebellion. ' O ! who can stand before God, when once he is angry ! ' Surely the bereaved and mourning survivors might exclaim of that memorable night, ' Let darkness seize upon it ; let that night be solitary ; let the stars

of the twilight thereof be dark ; let it look for light but have none ; neither let it see the dawning of the day.' Such is the language of human woe ; such the wailings of the bereaved. But to scenes like these happily we are strangers : such midnight cries have not yet been permitted to disturb our tents, or add to the plagues of the wilderness. 'Therefore we will sing of mercy ; unto thee, O Lord, will we sing.'

And now, traveller, having paid the tribute due to suffering humanity, let us withdraw our attention from antient Egypt's mourning and depopulated land ; and rather contemplate those scenes that more immediately obtrude on our notice in this desert wilderness, and in which we are more deeply interested. Behold those tents of various structure and dimensions scattered over the plain : some of them barely sheltering their inmates from the stormy blast ; some furnished with the comforts, others, with all the luxuries of life : they have so lengthened their

cords, and strengthened their stakes, as seems to have set the stormy blast at defiance; while all the appendages of wealth and prosperity hover over them like gay pennons, fluttering in the wind. But should we not quicken our pace, were we told there were few of these tents in which there was not one dead? Should we not be anxious to escape the contagious atmosphere, while scarcely crediting the report. But has death indeed entered these habitations? We hear not the voice of mourning and of wailing; but 'the voice of them that sing do we hear.' And yet they are dead: for 'those who live in pleasure, are dead while they live.' 'I know their works,' says the great Searcher of hearts, 'that they have a name that they live and are *dead*.' And O! how infinitely more terrific is this spiritual death, than that at which human nature stands appalled: yet of how comparatively few of the tents that are spread abroad can it be said, the inmates are all living souls! O! woeful scenes of disease and

death ! For the unrenewed sinner is also described as, ' full of wounds, and bruises and putrifying sores.' ' The whole head is sick ; the whole heart is faint.' Travel-ler, which is your tent ? Who, and what are its inmates ? is there but one dead among them ? Who is that one ? Let your heart respond to the solemn enquiry, and say, ' Lord is it I ?' ' Search me, O God, and try me, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.' But if happily there is reason to hope that ' you have passed from death unto life,' still it behoves you to examine strictly and anxiously your whole character, and general deportment ; whether it is in all respects in strict harmony with your profession. Are you conscious of filling up all the various duties of life, in each relation, giving to every one, according to his respective claims, ' good measure, heaped up and running over ?' Not imagining, as too many are apt to do, that assiduity and zeal in one direction, will compensate for langour and deficiency in

another. If this should be the case, you resemble one who has a member paralysed, while the rest of his body remains vigorous and healthy. O! how many are seen halting and walking lamely, even in the way to Zion! The diamond, in whatever direction it is turned, appears equally brilliant, equally attractive, nor requires to be placed in a certain position to exhibit its matchless lustre: so should the christian shine; and when the divine principle fully pervades the soul, thus uniformly will he reflect the light he receives from above. May this influence enter our dwellings, quickening each inmate, lest he sleep the sleep of death; and so operating, that all may not only have life, 'but have it more abundantly.' Blessed, thrice blessed, that earthly abode, where every inmate is spiritually, morally, and socially, alive.

No. II.

The driving was like the driving of Jehu the son of
Nimshi.

2 KINGS, chap. ix, ver. 20.

THIS mighty man of valour is by no means the only one who, from his own time to the present day, could be recognised by the manner of his driving: there have been furious drivers in every age, and among all conditions and ranks of mankind; or, in other words, impetuosity of character is not a phenomenon of so rare occurrence as to excite surprise, or rouse particular attention. And, besides this general impetuosity of temper, there are frequent instances in which, though it cannot fairly be deemed the prominent feature of the character, yet is there a furious driving of some favourite pursuit, or habit, or principle, which is urged, and

goaded, and driven, to the utter discomfiture of the darling habits and principles of all who may have the temerity to stand in the way, or to offer opposition.

But, traveller, hear you not that distant rumblingsound? Already it is not distant! Stand aside quickly; for a son of Jehu approaches! Ah! why linger you?—It is well if you feel not the weight of his chariot wheels. What may his errand be? Is it not to destroy an idolatrous queen, or to adjust the affairs of a kingdom, or at least to restore the rights of an oppressed individual? No such thing: it is nothing more than one of these staunch assertors of his own will, and of his own opinions, who thus comes with the fixed determination to overthrow and to trample down all opposition.

But in order quietly to indulge our reflections, we must retire from the bustle; for, behold how these impetuous drivers abound; so that unless we give place, we cannot hope to escape with impunity. See how they dash against each other, or

become entangled in the road, and unable to extricate themselves. Observe how they block up the way, and impede the progress of the more steady travellers, who would if possible pass quietly on,— who have no steed at all, — or who if they have, drive it at a sober rate, unambitious to be the foremost in the race, so they may but pursue their journey unmolested and in peace. Ah! let us, I say, turn aside; and, while pursuing our humble track, indulge the reflections which such a tumultuous scene suggests, and thereby learn to regulate our own pace, and to curb our own steeds, should we incline to take such auxiliaries into our service.

Jehu was entitled to commendation, as he punctually executed the task assigned him, and inflicted the prescribed punishment on those flagrant sinners, against whom he was sent, as the messenger of wrath: and in truth he proved himself to be a fit instrument for such a purpose; and having accomplished his

task, he was amply rewarded in a way well suited to his temper and his wishes, by Him whose commission he bore. It must have been an awfully interesting spectacle, to behold this mighty champion, driving through the streets of Jezreel, the appointed executioner of divine vengeance. What more interesting, save the entry of the Captain of our salvation into the city of Jerusalem? — The one was on an errand of death : the other on a mission of life. His own personal aggrandizement was probably the moving principle of the one; the salvation of mankind was the benign object of the other: the one, before he came in full view, was recognised by his furious driving; the other ‘did not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets;’ finally, the reward of the one extended but to four generations; but ‘of the kingdom and government of the other there shall be no end.’

The God of providence and of grace hath chosen various instruments, and

various means, to accomplish his pleasure, according to the counsel of his own will, and agreeably to the exigencies of every case; and we may observe that the divine procedure is generally deliberate and slow. In the stupendous work of creation, he could have said 'Let there be a world, with all its ample furniture, and its various inhabitants:' and a world would have darted into the wide expanse, instant as the lightning's flash. But he chose six days, in which to accomplish the work; ere this goodly structure was rendered a fit residence for man. Thus the history of the divine dispensations, through successive ages, more frequently exhibits this gradual operation of the almighty hand; but there are seasons when mankind are roused from their lethargy and supineness, by sudden irruptions of his wrath; when he bursts upon rebellious nations in an hour unlooked for; when 'he rides on a cherub and doth fly, and rideth on the wings of the wind'. And thus it will probably be at the final judgment;

when men will be found 'marrying and giving in marriage,' as they were at the predicted destruction of Jerusalem: and thus it frequently is at the death of incorrigible and impenitent sinners, who say, 'Where is the promise of his coming;' as though these momentous truths were vain chimeras or night-visions, till they find him coming suddenly upon them, when there is none to deliver. Ah! then, why this impetuous driving among the children of men? Why does a mortal creature, who knows not how soon he may fall into the hands of the living God, turn a deaf ear to the voice of mercy, and look with indifference, if not with hatred on the way—the only way of salvation—driving thus impetuously through this wilderness in pursuit of vanities of a day? How often, in pursuit of that butterfly, of that moth, are the foaming steeds urged on, the ground made to tremble beneath the chariot wheels, and the ill-fated travellers whom they happen to meet in their course, put to flight in all directions! Who that

has long travelled in this wilderness, but must have encountered some of these drivers in their impetuous pursuit of trifles light as air, insignificant and frail as the insects that float thereon; trifles, the pursuit of which is allowed to disturb the peace of all around, or to become the bane of social and domestic happiness, or, to use another figure, like the locusts that eat up every green thing, and render this wilderness still more sterile than sin has already made it.

O! that men would here slacken their pace, and quicken it where their immortal interests demand their utmost energies; like him who exclaimed that, ' ere he was aware, his soul made him like the chariots of Aminadab;' and, like those who aim ' so to run, that they may at length obtain' — ' to run with patience the heavenly race that is set before them.' This is the ardour, this the impetuosity (if so it may be termed) well adapted to its high object. O, traveller! be it your prevailing concern, above all other con-

cerns, 'to press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus.' In this all-important work, whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; and call up all thy powers into the service. When the vanquishing of our spiritual enemies, and the obtaining an incorruptible crown is the object, then, and then only, if possible, may our driving surpass even 'the driving of Jehu, the son of Nimshi.'

No. III.

I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

2 SAMUEL, chap. xii, ver. 23.

DEATH is the most dreaded of all the enemies of the human race : there is no affliction incident to mankind to be compared with that which tears the tenderest ties of our nature asunder, for ever separates us from those beloved objects which were most dear to it, and puts a final termination to the social intercourse of our mortal state. What powerful considerations will suffice to console the mourning survivors of those who are thus for ever torn from them ; whether they contemplate the ruin and desolation to which the dear objects of their affection are devoted in the silent grave ; or

recur to their own bereavement, when 'the desire of their eyes is taken away with a stroke?' The royal mourner, like other mourners, stood appalled at this two-edged sword, when it was brandished at his bosom; although the object of his regret had made so brief a sojourn in this wilderness, as that he had scarcely time afforded him to reward his fond parent with a smile, much less with one instance of filial affection, or one encouraging auspice of future character. But as on other occasions, so on this, when the final stroke had taken place, 'he encouraged himself in the Lord his God;' and has left this example on record, for the imitation of the long train of mourners who were to succeed him in future ages. 'He shall not return to me, but I shall go to him.' What! into the cold chambers of the grave — the land of forgetfulness, of silence, and of darkness, there to become food for worms, and to be insensible as the clods of the valley! Ah, no! — this is neither the language of nature, nor of grace. This gloomy recep-

tacle, appointed for all living, has no charms for the saint any more than for the worldling; but it is the inestimable privilege of the former, to contemplate these separations from his dearest friends, who die in the Lord, however painful the stroke may be, as neither final nor really afflictive. Who that is daily groaning under the burden of sin, and toiling in the Christian warfare, shall desire those who have laid down the burden and finished the conflict, to return and resume them again — to exchange their crown for a helmet, their palm of victory for a sword? And although length of days are numbered among the blessings and the rewards of the obedient; affliction inevitably accompanies them: for who can long travel in this wilderness, without experiencing it to be a land of drought, of fiery flying serpents, and of every evil thing that infests a desert. Happy those who, after having sustained the tedious conflict, and endured the heat and burden of a long day, and passed through the

fiery trial, come forth as gold seven times refined : happy those also, when he who numbers our days, and who, from the beginning, has allotted us our appointed time on earth, by an immutable decree cuts them short, and with them all their accompanying woes !

Ah ! fellow-traveller, do you find your mortal frame so shaken and deranged under this painful stroke ; and shall you wish the dear departed again to return and encounter all the pain, and all the bitter regrets, under which you are now groaning ?—to return from that salubrious atmosphere, where ‘ the inhabitant shall not any more say, I am sick ;’ to experience again all those harassing symptoms of decay, those harbingers of dissolution, which you so painfully and anxiously witnessed, without having the power to ward them off, and which so tortured your own bosom with gloomy anticipations, and deep dismay ? What an escape ! — what felicity ! To have passed the dark, the long dreaded valley,

once for all! — to have encountered the last enemy; and to be now for ever placed beyond his power! With you, and with me, these evils are yet in prospect; we know not how many, nor how few our weary steps are yet to be in this wilderness, ere we must engage in the same fearful conflict; nor can we tell what sore afflictions may intervene: but we do know, whatever they may be, that our dear departed friends shall never participate in them; as they have for ever done with their own personal sufferings, so also they have done with ours; those eyes, now so peacefully closed, shall never more be held waking with anxiety on our account. In the land which they now inhabit there is no more sorrow or crying, and all tears are wiped from their eyes. No; they shall not return hither again; and can we add, with humble confidence and hope, we shall go to them? It behoves us now to make this our grand concern; for, if it yet remains a doubtful case, they would say, could they now address us, 'Weep

not for us, but weep for yourselves.'— Shall the withered or unripe fruits of this desert track be preferred to the ripe clusters of Canaan's fruitful land, and be retained with such eager grasp, that when we approach the margin of that river which terminates our wilderness travels, and the sound of its rolling waves vibrates on our ears, we stand appalled, and linger

' Shivering on the bank,
And fear to launch away ?'

rather, with hopes full of immortality, although our dust must likewise descend to the grave, and mingle with that we have so reluctantly deposited there, shall our emancipated spirits also unite with theirs, and hold sweeter converse than ever they held below.

Behold, how yonder bright luminary cheers our dubious path! how desolate and forlorn should we be if deprived of its invigorating rays! But in that bright abode whither our departed friends are gone, there is no need of the sun : a glory

infinitely more resplendent there perpetuates an everlasting day. O! then, Death, where is thy sting? O! grave, where is thy victory? For that precious dust shall be reclaimed, and death and the grave, at the appointed hour, shall yield up their prey. Yes, it was sown in corruption, in weakness, and in dishonour. I watched, with anxious eye and misgiving heart, the slow approaching ruin: all that the tenderest solicitude could suggest was done to uphold the tottering fabric. It did not fall with a sudden crash; but every succeeding day effected another, and another dilapidation. Here I propped, and there I repaired a gap; but, alas! alas! it baffled my utmost skill, and I saw the fair tenement—that which I had fondly hoped would have proved my shelter during the wintry blast of age, levelled with the dust:—it shall not shelter me more; it shall no more shield my hoary head from the pelting storm. Yet shall I not be destitute and defenceless; for behold ‘a refuge from the wind,

a covert from the storm, and the shadow of a great rock in this weary land.' Then, why flow these tears in such copious streams? Let the mourners in this wilderness repair to the refuge provided for them; that which God shews in the gospel; that to which grace leads by the spirit: then may they with cheerfulness exclaim, under these painful bereavements, 'Although our dear departed friends shall no more return to us, we shall go to them.' So may they 'comfort each other with these words!'

No. IV.

How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles,
O Israel.

NUMBERS, chap. xxiv, ver. 5.

THIS might well have been the exclamation of one, who was not, like Balaam, impelled by inspiration. The tents of the thousands of Israel, spread abroad over the wilderness, must have afforded a goodly spectacle to the view of the most uninterested observer. What encampment can the page of history exhibit, which shall compare with that, whose captain was the Lord of Hosts! which, of all the various objects that have instigated hostile armies, could vie with that which animated this mighty host to march against the devoted land of Canaan?—Wonders had already been achieved;

wonders were yet in store : the camp had already resounded with the song of victory and of triumph, from one extremity to the other ; every voice united in the joyful chorus, ‘ Sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously ; the horse and his rider hath he cast into the sea.’ But the waters of Jordan, now rolling on in their usual channel, were yet to be arrested, and leave a path for the chosen people to pass over. The walls of Jericho, now defying attack, and appearing invulnerable to human force, were yet to fall with a mighty crash, and yield up the guilty inhabitants they enclosed, to the swords of the invaders. Who, when contemplating this mighty host, guided and protected by the strong arm of Jehovah, as the instrument employed to accomplish his vast designs, could have refrained from joining in the exclamation, ‘ How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel !’

And when the mind takes a similar survey of a Christian country, and compares

it with heathen lands, where the light of the gospel has not yet beamed ; when it contemplates the tents of the true Israel, scattered everywhere abroad, and like brilliant gems embellishing it, by shedding their benign lustre all around ; when it reflects on the warfare in which this great company is engaged, and the Divine purposes of which those who compose it are the objects or the instruments, well may we exclaim, with wonder and admiration, ‘ How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel ! ’

More especially, when, contracting our view, we take a similar survey of a church of Christ—a distinct assemblage of Christians—we may well indulge the high encomium. But, alas ! when the exclamation was originally uttered, the people were yet on this side the promised land ; they were yet travellers in the wilderness ; and however goodly the spectacle might have appeared collectively, a minuter survey of each individual tent would have proved that, in a spiritual sense, ‘ they

were not all Israel who were of Israel.' Their general history proclaims the lamentable fact, that, notwithstanding their songs of triumph; notwithstanding the repeated occasions they had to sing of mercy, as well as of judgment, they still remained a stiff-necked and a rebellious people. And, O! had all those families, to whom this appellation more especially belonged, been swept away in a moment, as in the case of Dathan and Abiram, how thin would the ranks have appeared! What desolate chasms between tent and tent! verifying what was afterwards spoken by him who well 'knew what was in man;' that 'narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it;' that 'many are called, but few are chosen.' And can we, after taking a closer survey of distinct Christian communities, indulge the hope that some gaps would not thus be made amongst them also, were every family to be detached which has only 'a name to live,' or every

individual member of such families rejected who has not on the wedding garment?

Yet 'how goodly are thy tents, O Jacob!' How goodly is the dwelling of the true Israelite! To outward appearance, many of their dwellings exhibit little to attract notice, or excite admiration; for they are often visibly deficient in all which is esteemed goodly by the world: nevertheless, goodly they are in the true sense of the word; because each individual dwelling is pitched on the very spot in this wilderness selected by the infinite wisdom of Him who fixes the bounds of our habitation, and who, by his superintending providence, and cheering presence in all our wanderings, affords us still occasion to say, 'The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.'

Moreover, such tents are especially goodly, as they are those of pilgrims travelling to a better country, and who are seeking a city that hath foundations eternal in the heavens. Here, too,

citizens of that promised land are nurtured and disciplined for their journey through this wilderness: here, and only here, dwell all that are estimable on earth; those on whom alone the Most High can look with complacency; for from these tents only, ascends the voice of prayer and of praise, arising as sweet incense in the morning, and 'the lifting up of the hands as the evening sacrifice.' The store may not be ample; the basket may be scantily supplied: yet that basket, and that store is blessed; for 'the little that a righteous man hath, is more, infinitely more, than the treasures of many wicked.'

Is the Christian land, the Christian tabernacle, the Christian tent thus goodly? Traveller, to what tribe do you belong? Which is the house of your father, among the thousands of Israel? Is it overshadowed with the Divine banner? Is there any accursed thing in that tent? or is all within pure — is your heart right with God? Are peace offerings to be found there? Has the blood of the great sacri-

ITINERARY.

led there? and are you
for the consolation of
may you be one of those
; down judgment upon a
rch, or upon your father's

No. V.

And when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward ; and all the people shouted, and said, God save the King.

1 SAMUEL, chap. x, ver. 23, 24.

AND now, traveller, do you perceive, interspersed among the passing throng, a few of goodly stature, so overtopping the rest as to attract general notice ? They have the superior advantage of observing the various movements of those around them, and of taking a survey of distant objects, in a manner far exceeding that with which others of middle stature are privileged ; while the weak and the diminutive are in perpetual danger of being borne down by the crowd ; for they are incapable of discerning any objects except such as are in their immediate vicinity, and would frequently find themselves unable to proceed at all, but for the aid of those who can

better discern the way, with all its various intricacies and lurking dangers.

Such also is the case with human intellect: the world of mind has its various gradations, occasionally exhibiting talents of gigantic dimensions, capable of taking a wide range, and of discerning objects far and near, with comprehension and precision. When the people beheld Saul, who was ordained to be their future ruler, guide, and defender, they shouted with one accord, ' God save the King !' and superior mental endowments have a like claim on us for expressions of respect, confidence, and honour ; nor will we, fellow-traveller, although we may never expect to be ourselves thus elevated above the multitude, feel reluctant at lending our feeble voices to the general acclamation ; nor at ' rendering honour to whom honour is due ;' for, to these varied and illustrious talents it is, that we are indebted for many of the comforts and accommodations of our journey, and for many a friendly light reflected on a dark and dubious path.

But, behold, one of these mental prodigies approaches ! Let us tarry to gaze, to admire, and to profit. Yet, as he has no exclusive pretension to exclaim, as he draws near, ‘ I am the man ; wisdom shall die with me,’ let our admiration be restrained within sober bounds ; for, behold, yonder, another, and another, each surrounded with his admiring crowd, who seem by their vociferations to have imbibed the spirit of those who exclaimed, ‘ I am of Paul, and I of Apollos :’ rather let our homage be supremely rendered to the Grand Source of every excellence, and of every good and perfect gift. Providence, in mercy to mankind, dispenses its benefits so that they shall be furnished with instructors adapted to their various conditions and exigencies : it behoves us therefore to render to each of these, in whatever department they move, a sober and temperate respect ; yet at the same time not forgetting, that as every man has his weak side, his truest friends are those who do not tempt him to expose it. The

wisest and the best of men are not always proof against an excess of homage and adulation—against ‘thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to think,’ and thereby being betrayed into a roughness and austerity of manner, which might well authorize the question,—‘Tell us by what authority *thou* doest these things ; and who gave *thee* this authority?’

When the people, captivated by the imposing appearance of Saul, hailed him as the sovereign of their choice, it certainly was not with the servile intention that themselves, or their sons, or their daughters, should become bakers and confectioners, or that he should in the remotest degree maintain his state by their degradation. A dwarf is not required to prostrate himself, to be trampled on by a giant. Instances might be adduced, where this predominant principle of self-love has taken unwarrantable advantages of an injudicious homage : where exalted talents have thus suffered themselves to degenerate into the cha-

racter of spoiled and pampered children ; while their troublesome and ridiculous eccentricities, which in common characters would not have been tolerated, have become real nuisances in the society they frequented : but great men enjoy the privilege of doing little things with impunity.*

While we indulge a smile at these follies, let us, however, avail ourselves of those elevated talents, which were originally bestowed, not to feed the vanity of individuals, but for general utility and extensive benefit. Men of superior intellect scatter their diversified gifts as they pass along : they repair the high ways, clear obstructions, direct the enquiring traveller, and set right the feet of multitudes who are going astray.

* One of this description turned upon a gentleman, who had the temerity to differ from him in opinion, with 'Sir, I am not accustomed to be contradicted.' 'True, sir,' replied his opponent ; 'but probably it would have been better for you, if you had.' Perhaps, had similar rebuffs been more frequent, this great man's society would have been not at all less interesting or instructive.

Manifold are the evils infesting this wilderness; but to what extent would they be multiplied, were it not for the exertions of intellect! intellect, the parent of science, the source of all that embellishes this desert, that renders 'crooked places straight, and rough places plain.' On you, ye men of intellect, your fellow-travellers have imperious claims: you were not created prodigies, for men awhile to wonder at and to admire; but your talents, of whatever order they may be, are a part of the common stock, to be appropriated to general use. Have you ambition? It is somewhere to be found, that 'He who humbleth himself shall be exalted.' Well, indeed, may the wisdom of this world feel humbled, when it is there declared also that, 'God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise;' that, 'He hath hid from the wise and prudent the all-important knowledge which is essential to salvation, and revealed it unto babes.' So that we may exclaim 'Where is the wise? where is the

scribe?' what possess they which they have not received, and to whom is the glory due?*

But who are those, towering equally high above the crowd? Their unnatural and unequal gait attracts more notice than admiration. Behold one walking on tiptoe, with outstretched neck, and countenance inflated with self complacency! and another mounted on stilts, to render himself yet more conspicuous! These are the conceited and the vain, 'who imagine themselves to be something, when they are nothing.' Thus *they* render themselves contemptible; but even these shall not pass on without affording us an additional lesson. Let them admo-

* Much indeed, says President Dwight, is said of our intellect; it would be well if more could be said, and said with truth, concerning our wisdom. With all our boasts, how little do we know! How many objects are presented to us every day, of which we know nothing except their existence! How many questions do even little children ask, which no philosopher is able to answer! How many subjects of investigation say to every enquirer, 'Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further.'

nish us to be content with the sphere in which we are placed ; and with that portion of gifts and talents, whatever they may be, which the Divine Disposer knew to be most suitable to our station : let not these gifts be misapplied, but improved and devoted to the purposes for which they were designed. So shall we be more disposed to 'seek earnestly the best gifts, those better gifts, that are attainable even by the humblest intellects. For there are those, who are a head and shoulders higher than their neighbours, not in natural gifts, but in spiritual graces. Here, it is deep sinking that exalts : before this sort of honour, is humility. Faith, in exercise, performs wonders ; and 'holiness exalteth a nation.' This sort of pre-eminence does not oppress, but helps, stimulates, and guides weaker christians, and makes him who possesses it, not like Saul, the oppressor ; but like David, the leader of the people.

As there are infinite gradations of intellect in this lower world, so we are as-

sured that the inhabitants of the world above are distinguished from each other as 'one star differeth from another star in glory.' But while to attain the humblest seat in those celestial regions, is more to be desired than all the accumulated wealth and honour this wilderness can afford, why do we not aspire to those higher dignities of which our immortal natures are capable: so as to be 'made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light;' so as to have an abundant entrance administered to us among them? Let us aspire 'to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,' while we renounce all glorying in the powers or gifts bestowed upon us here on earth.

No. VI.

Yea the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow
a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even
thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God.

PSALM lxxxiv, ver. 3.

THOSE happy souls, who, having finished their painful wanderings through this wilderness, have entered the promised land, and joined in the triumphant worship of the temple there, will exclaim, with unmixed feelings of joy, 'How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts;' for in those tranquil regions enters nought that defileth; neither do the inhabitants of that pure and equal atmosphere desire to go any more out, when once they have triumphantly entered 'through the gates into the city.'

But, although glorious things are spoken of the church on earth, the portal of the temple above; and although

the Psalmist, in the language of holy extasy, could exclaim, 'How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts;' it yet bore visible marks of being the Church on *earth*; for, lo! the sparrow ventureth to build herself a house, and the swallow a nest around these sacred altars! Thoughtless creatures! unconscious on what hallowed ground they trespassed—into whose sacred presence they were intruding: but not more unconscious they, not more thoughtless, not so presumptuous, as those who flit to and fro, impelled by interest, by custom, or by curiosity, equally regardless of the sanctity of the place, and of the majesty of Him who there presides. The swallow, wandering bird, has no settled dwelling place: driven by summer's heat, or winter's cold, from clime to clime; an emblem of those professors who can neither endure the heat of persecution, nor the chilling blast of adversity, for the cause and interest to which they profess to attach themselves. The sparrow, too, insignificant and unim-

portant creature! has chosen these sacred altars around which to build her nest, and rear her progeny; resembling those giddy triflers who frequent the house of God, and profane his holy courts by bringing there the hay, and straw, and stubble of their own vain and worldly imaginations. Here they hatch, and brood, and twitter; pondering over all their earthly plans and projects; while, like incense from the altar, the prayers of the saints ascend continually around them. O, traveller! may you never thus presume to profane these sacred courts, these heavenly resting places, reared for solace and refreshment in your toilsome pilgrimage! May every such trespass be checked, by recollecting the presence of Him who once drove out the buyers and sellers from the temple. Already hear you not his voice, saying to these busy intruders, 'Take these things hence'?

Turn then the words into a humiliating confession to him who claims your services in body, soul, and spirit: complain to him.

of these flitting visitors, these trifling intruders into the temple of your heart; these unholy disturbers of the worship which should take place there: implore him, though it were even with a scourge, to drive them far away from these sacred places and sacred hours, which ought to be occupied with the great sacrifice, while devout prayer, as acceptable incense, arises towards heaven.

Insignificant as is the twittering sparrow, it is not deemed unworthy of divine regard: it cannot fall to the ground without our heavenly Father's knowledge. Let us improve the hint grounded upon it, of God's greater regard to the humblest of his children, which warrants them to claim for their souls the help and blessings that are needed in their spiritual journey, and the food which his altar alone can furnish, even that Lamb of God, whose flesh is meat indeed.

Improve the hint, devout parents, to bring all your nestlings to join you in humble worship: where the sparrow may

lawfully come, there may your little ones be found, and be welcomed by him, who has said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

'The sparrow hath made a nest where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of Hosts.' So, many families, brought through custom to the temple, and reared as it were round the altar, yet are never informed by their parents of the holy purposes for which it was reared. O! you who are chargeable with this most unnatural of all criminal neglects, wonder not if, when your nestlings are fledged and take the wing, they should speed their flight into the wilderness, make their lodgment in the dark foliage of the forest, and return to you again no more.

Rather, traveller, may you, and the children that God hath given you, unite with the multitude that keep a holy day, and surround these altars with the voice of joy and praise!

No. VII.

And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him, My Lord, hearken unto me : the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver : what is that betwixt me and thee ? Bury therefore thy dead. And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron ; and Abraham weighed unto Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.

GENESIS, chap. xxiii, ver. 15, 16.

WELL would it be for the peace of mankind, did this current money with the merchant create no other contention than such as is recorded in this transaction, between Abraham and Ephron the Hittite : but the selfish principle, ever active and predominating, and ready for the occasion, renders such instances of disinterested friendship comparatively rare. The love of money is pronounced by the inspired penman to be the root of all evil ; and the

experience of mankind, in every succeeding age, has but too well confirmed the assertion ; proving that those who will be rich, not only pierce *themselves* through with many sorrows, but, as much as in them lies, those also whom they conceive to be obstacles, or who are at all opposed to their covetous pursuits.

Traveller, how stand you affected towards this current money ? You need not be so encumbered with it, as that it shall impede your journey, while many around you have not a sufficiency to defray their expenses on the road : on the contrary, should your own supply be scanty and precarious, look up to him who loves to be trusted, and who will assuredly furnish a table for you in the wilderness, although it may not be entirely such a one as you would provide for yourself. He has promised that your bread shall be given, and your water shall be sure ; though as yet the flinty rock frowns upon you, and the desert is parched and barren all around.

But who is this, with rueful face and tattered garb, that comes so deeply laden with the precious ore? It is not *current* money with the merchant; for it never circulates. Let us pass on, nor hope, either by example, persuasion, or reproof, to extirpate avarice from a miser's heart: unless arrested by a power divine, he will still accumulate as he goes, till the hand of death arrests him, and he is compelled to quit his grasp for ever.

In what different estimation is this precious metal held by the various classes of mankind! Some lavish it in all directions, according to their humours, their appetites, or caprices; imagining that 'to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant,' till 'their poverty cometh like an armed man;' while others affect to despise it, and would claim the praise of nobleness of spirit, by seeming regardless of what many seek so eagerly. But the man of wealth, when actuated by correct principles, sustains a rank and influence in society essentially beneficial to

its interests: such characters impart a dignity and importance to wealth, of which the narrow-minded and the prejudiced in vain attempt to deprive it: while its possessors, having chosen the perfect way, aim to walk wisely in it (which is more than can be said of every one who does walk in that way); they guide their affairs with discretion; and while dealing out their bread to the hungry, and 'giving good measure, heaped up, and running over,' yet do not scruple strictly to apportion what they dispense to the exigencies of the case. The conduct adopted by David for the holy services was, that he dealt out silver for things of silver, and gold for things of gold; and those by measure and by weight. It has been the misfortune of some men (and very good men too), from the want of a comprehensive view of things, to be less provident for their own houses than is required by the plain command of him who honoured them with houses for which to provide. When this error origi-

nates in a mistaken benevolence, it would indeed be a high breach of Christian charity to brand them with the epithet which in any other case such conduct strictly merits: we must not say of such men, that they are 'worse than infidels;' but truly they are very ill-judging christians. This conduct is founded on a reliance that Providence will provide for their needy families; and they doubtless have the promise that it will do so: but in what manner, according to its usual operations, does it provide, but by leaving them in their turn to become dependent and burdensome on others?—an expectation and a hope, evidently at variance with their own principle, 'that it is more blessed to give than to receive.' Thus they injudiciously (not to say unkindly) deprive their families of a privilege held in such high estimation by themselves. So are mankind ever verging to extremes; any path seems preferable to that middle way marked out for us by true wisdom.

Will the period ever arrive when this

current money with the merchant shall circulate in an equal direction, and answer those purposes, and those alone, for which so convenient a vehicle was originally intended? But into whatever channels we may choose to direct it; whether to dispense it according to the pure and wise dictates of christian benevolence, or to devote it to sensual gratifications, or to arrest it in its course, and doom it to perpetual imprisonment in the miser's coffer; there is a day coming, when a strict account will be required of the purposes to which it has been devoted, the real estimation in which it was held, and the secret motives which influenced our conduct respecting it. To endeavour therefore to impress our own minds with its intrinsic worth, and the designs of providence in intrusting us with any portion of it, would be the most effectual mode of regulating its distribution; and thus prepare us for that day, when we shall be required to render up an account of our stewardship.

Much of what is intrinsically good, much of what is indispensable to our comfort in this wilderness, be our wishes ever so moderate and circumscribed, this current money is able to procure; although, much that is infinitely more desirable, even in the estimation of worldly men, it cannot purchase: christian prudence (the only prudence that is of any value) will neither withhold more than is meet, nor be needlessly lavish, as though profusion were a virtue on which we expected Providence would smile. It is not the less true, although the sentiment of a confirmed miser, 'that farthings are the seed of guineas:' why, therefore, should farthings be despised, or needlessly squandered? yet, there are those, (and in the christian world too,) who deem attention to small sums beneath their high vocation. Woe to that tent where this error has infected the heads of it; the evil is then incalculable. How often must the five baskets, and the twelve baskets of fragments be brought to notice, ere these

erroneous views are eradicated from among those who rank themselves with the prudent and the discreet? How often, especially, must persons of moderate means be reminded that they must be watchful of *their fragments*, or they cannot practise the virtue of economy at all! Even the real christian ranks himself as such at too high a rate, when he imagines that these imperious duties would degrade his character; and so feels disposed to undervalue those fragments over which his Divine Master watched with such scrupulous care. He seemed to take it for granted, that the disciples had paid the circumstance more than a cursory attention, by his requiring of them an exact account of the fragments so preserved at two different seasons. It is probable, the reply of some high-flown professors of the present day would have been, to such an interrogation, 'I did not notice,' or 'I really forget.'

There is one consideration, of which those should be reminded, who would

maintain a consistent character for benevolence ; which is, that if they are really as indifferent towards sums small or great as they profess to be, they are in an equal proportion giving of that which costs them nothing. We may bestow our coat on him who has asked our cloak, and yet have added nothing to our christian stature, if neither cloak nor coat were at all valued by us. So also, we may pride ourselves on the very current coin of condescension ; not sufficiently aware, that of all the virtues, this is one of the least costly ; for there is a certain feeling in human nature, which renders it much easier to stoop than to bow. Neither will it do, to carry a purse in one hand to relieve the necessitous, and a scourge in the other, to chastise those who may not in these respects perfectly accord with the standard we have adopted : for, ‘ although we give all our goods to feed the poor, and our bodies to be burned, if we have not charity, it availeth nothing.’ That there is such a spirit, or

at least has been, is evident, from this admonition of the apostle. Wherever it is found, it will vainly watch the rippling waters for its expected reward: the bread returns not again — no, not after many days! Surely the human 'heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Traveller, be it your habitual care and mine, to 'walk circumspectly in all things; not as fools, but as wise.'

But in our musings on this current coin, have we not forgotten the solemn event which gave birth to them? No, we have not forgotten it; but as it is the termination of our own actions and travels in the wilderness, so, as being infinitely the more interesting subject, shall it conclude our present meditation.

And what, fellow-traveller, will be the last purchase which this current money of the merchant will make, on your account and on mine? Even a winding sheet, and a coffin! and a few feet of earth, with perhaps a white stone recording the day — the eventful day, on which our

wanderings in this wilderness finally concluded, and the portion of years that has been allotted us for our sojourn in it for ever terminated!

‘Ye living men, come view the ground,
Where you must shortly lie.’

And although we know not the letters or the figures that shall be inscribed on that white stone, they are already written in the book of the Divine decrees, and are waiting, thence to be transcribed. Ah! traveller, beyond that day we cannot pass. Is the tree now waving in the forest, of which our narrow house is to be constructed? And where are the feet which are to bear us away? Are they yet young and tender, and unequal to the burden?—or do they even now stand before the door? We cannot tell; and because we cannot tell, let our loins be girded, and our lamps burning. This is an exigency, for which, above all other things, it behoves us to provide without delay.

But ere we arrive at the end of our

course, it not unfrequently falls to our lot to have those first summoned away, with whom we had long travelled, who had shared with us our hopes and our fears, our joys and our sorrows; who had beguiled the tedious way; and, by a thousand well remembered attentions, lightened our burden: and now to lose this support, and at a time too when it is more than ever needed, seems almost too heavy a stroke for our declining strength to bear. But the time is come when Abraham must 'bury his dead out of his sight.' He had left his father's house and the land of his nativity; he had quitted the Philistines' land after sojourning there many days; and he separated from Lot, his near kinsman: but in all these vicissitudes his beloved Sarah was still by his side. Now, alas! he must pursue the remainder of his journey alone; or substitute a Keturah to supply the place of long tried attachment. When such breaches are made, the last enemy has nearly completed his work. Lonely traveller!

a few more weary steps ; and if you have had a portion of Abraham's faith — have been a follower of them who now inherit the promises — you shall be carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom, and participate in his glorious reward.

As we brought nothing into this world with us, and as it is certain we can carry nothing out, it behoves us to employ well this current money ; for riches profit not in the day of wrath : let us then make friends with this mammon, that we may at last ' be joyfully received into everlasting habitations.'

But after making the best use of earthly treasures, we have necessities to which they cannot reach. Divine mercy has provided for this, and ' redeems not with silver and gold ; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.' Abraham's current money sufficed only to supply his temporal wants, and to provide for the body : this price, ' all price beyond,' secures the safety, the happiness of the immortal soul.

Yet in labouring and storing up with a view to the soul's benefit, many grossly mistake; expecting to gain salvation by their own works and righteousness, rather than by the Saviour's blood alone: such will eventually discover that, when weighed in the balance, this, if found wanting in a transaction so infinitely important, whatever else they proffer, will not be found current money with the merchant.

No. VIII.

I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

2 TIMOTHY, chap. i, ver. 12.

TRAVELLERS in the wilderness frequently carry with them valuable treasures, and may well fear the Arabian in the desert who lieth in wait. Robbers so abound as to render an escort indispensable; and among such escorts there is generally a principle of faithfulness, which insures their attachment, so that a traveller may cheerfully commit himself and his treasures to the custody of those who will guarantee his safety at all personal hazards.

Notwithstanding all these precautions, an attack may be expected; but the traveller's confidence in the integrity and honour of his guide keeps him tranquil:

at every step enemies abound; but he knows whom he has trusted, and he depends on that courage which will not be lacking, and on that faithfulness which, in the time of need, will not fail.

It may happen, indeed, that guides, the most faithful, may miss the way; or soldiers, the most valiant, may be overcome by superior force: there will, therefore, naturally mingle some fear with our confidence; some anxiety, notwithstanding all our precautions.

It is the Christian's lot to travel thus richly laden, and among enemies the most potent; but it is his peculiar privilege to be under the protection of one who demands his unlimited confidence: as there can be no lack of inclination, of faithfulness, or of power, he may pursue his way undaunted, in the face of all dangers, and say, 'I know whom I have believed.'

Ah! what valuable jewels, what boundless riches, has the Christian to secure! A world, a universe, compared with them, is as the small dust in the balance. What

can be named that a man shall give in exchange for them? or what sacrifices are too costly, or what exertions too strenuous to ensure their safety? What a stimulus to arouse all his energies amid the toils and perils of the way; to look to the end of the journey with an humble confidence, that what has been committed to divine keeping shall one day be produced unimpaired, uninjured, never to be impaired or endangered more!

Yet, when Satan comes 'as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour,' the Christian is apt to say, 'I shall this day fall by my enemy.' He finds that he has to wrestle with principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world. He is no Sampson, and would make but feeble fight if left to his own prowess, or his own resolution.

With great propriety, therefore, he accepts the proffered assistance of the Captain of our salvation — one who is mighty to save — the leader of the hosts of the Lord — who has overcome, who has car-

ried his captivity captive, and who must reign till he hath subdued all enemies under his feet.

The very essence of religion, therefore, is a committing of the soul with all its immortal interests into his hands. This, at the commencement of his pilgrimage, the Christian traveller does ; and also in every stage of his journey, and on every especial occasion, finding the name of ' the Lord to be a strong tower, he runneth to it, and is safe.'

The spiritual pilgrim, when he recollects to whom he has committed these his dearest interests, may travel on courageously, knowing that his treasure is safe. Whether he surveys him on Calvary below, or on Mount Zion above ; whether he contemplates his spotless humanity, or his divine dignity, with the greatest propriety he may exultingly shout, ' I know whom I have believed.'

These invaluable treasures are also committed into the hands of an experienced guide, one who is well acquainted with

the way, and who has himself encountered all the perils of this wilderness. The enemy attacked him when there alone; but found nothing in him by which he could work with one single temptation: he knows, therefore, how to succour them that are tempted, and can always find a way for their escape. When their spirit is overwhelmed within them, he knoweth their path, he is acquainted with all their wanderings, and will 'lead them by a way they know not, to a city of habitation.'

While travelling toward that better country through this desert land, the accommodations of the way are wisely and kindly superintended by our divine guide and conductor; and, when the traveller ventures all his immortal interests in his hands, well may he surrender to the same keeping his lesser concerns, nor be anxious respecting food or raiment, health or comforts of any kind; for he knoweth that we have need of all these things.— 'He who hath given us his Son, will he not also with him freely give us all things?'

And with respect to those who are dear to us as our own souls, whose welfare we ardently desire in this waste howling wilderness, that we may see their good, and rejoice with them; or for whose future welfare when our pilgrimage is over, we feel anxious; let nature and friendship rejoice in their behalf, and rest on the blessed promises that are so abundantly given for our support. So may the widow and the orphan be left in those hands which are engaged to keep them alive. We know in whom in all these respects we have believed, and that he is fully able to keep that which we have so committed to him. Especial seasons will often arise, in which we shall peculiarly need this help — when we shall rejoice to recollect in whom we have formerly believed: many an occasion will occur which will call us to celebrate this faithfulness, and which will serve to assure us that, of a truth, he is still able to keep that which we have heretofore committed to him.

But it is against *that day* that our pre-

cautions are taken, and his care especially sought after; and *that day* will eminently show that he was able to keep all that we committed to him. How great will be the exultation, when on *that day* we find our souls safe and secure — pardoned, perfected, and placed in heaven! — when, however inexplicable our former wanderings may have appeared, we find all explained and cleared up to our perfect satisfaction. And if, too, we should then behold those most dear to us, and for whom we have so often pleaded while in this vale of tears, assembled together at his right hand; then shall we with devout extasy confess, how able he was to keep all that we committed to him against *that day*.

And the worldling possesses a treasure also, on which he sets a higher value than on his immortal soul: but, whatever may be its intrinsic worth, to whom can he commit it to ensure its security against any future day, or indeed for the shortest period? Like the Christian, he finds

himself utterly unable to defend his treasure ; he perceives enemies of every description, and at every turn, way-laying his path : but in whom shall he repose unlimited confidence, when daily experience admonishes him to ‘ cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils ? ’ Disregarding this faithful monitor, he clearly evinces that he knows not in whom he has believed, and has yet to learn the fallacy of all his sanguine hopes and expectations. Against *that day* ! Ah ! on that eventful day, what of all that he so highly prized, does he expect to find ? Those things which he valued most shall be as stubble, when the firmament itself shall melt with fervent heat. The reluctant soul must now re-unite with a body which has been the instrument of its destruction. Sorrowful was once the parting ; but how much more sorrowful the meeting ; for both must now be banished from the presence of Him, who will present millions of immortal spirits to his Father, ‘ without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.’ O !

worldly traveller, for a moment arrest yourself in your eager course, and reflect on whom you are believing; and lay your account for the events, the awful events of that coming, that final day.

No. IX.

I have been young, and now am old.

PSALM xxxvii, ver. 25.

THIS sentence is well calculated to impress the mind with some of the most solemn and momentous thoughts that can occupy it on this side the grave. It is a subject in which both youth and age are equally interested, as its tendency is, as well to check the impetuosity and regulate the future course of the one through this wilderness world, as to correct and amend the short residue of the other. Especially, *youthful* traveller, be admonished to suspend, at least for a moment, your eager pursuits, to contemplate those hoary heads and those decrepid forms, and to be instructed ; nor seem as if you esteemed them as the dregs

and refuse of our nature ; done with, and fit for nought but to be now thrown aside as utterly useless. Ah ! for your own sake, deal not thus with them ; rather gather up these fragments of humanity, cherishing them while yet they may be preserved, ‘ that nothing be lost.’

‘ Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, for it is a crown of glory, when found in the way of righteousness ;’ and even when unhappily this is not the case, there is no provision made in the divine command, whereby you can be released from these claims, nor can any circumstances absolve you from your obligation to respect the hoary head as such, although you are compelled to withhold that respect from the individual character.

The progress of society, in knowledge, in refinement, in active benevolence, and we would hope also in personal piety, is a pleasing characteristic of the present age ; and whenever this amiable temper is superadded, it embellishes the character in a high degree ; for certainly those who

have arrived at the further confines of this wilderness, need not that their path should be rendered more difficult and rugged by slight and unkindness, when it is generally made sufficiently so by feebleness and infirmity. The genuineness of that benevolence may fairly be questioned, which does not extend to the aged, because they are aged ; as well as to the poor, because they are poor: for age has claims of its own, quite independent of adventitious circumstances, and makes its imperious demands on the persons of the rich as well as of the poor, who every succeeding day approach nearer to a level.

The aged poor ! Ah ! that is a piteous spectacle : but are there not some of the number who became poor by their own prodigality and improvidence ? Here, youthful traveller, you are furnished with another impressive lesson : we hope you are ready and willing, according to your ability, to alleviate the wants, and supply the necessities of these claimants on your

compassion. But you naturally wish, when you shall yourself have arrived at that advanced stage of your journey, to be in a condition that shall render you independent of such gratuitous services, and to be amply furnished with resources of your own : embrace, then, your present opportunities, and provide, by all lawful means within your power, for this time of extreme need. So says worldly wisdom ; and so saying, it administers sober counsel : while that wisdom which is from above, has an infinitely higher aim ; for after all, what a forlorn being is he, who has made this the primary object of his life ! Those bags and those treasures, thus accumulated, are of no further value, beyond the confines of this wilderness ; he will soon become an inhabitant of a country where they cannot purchase him one drop of water to cool his tongue. O ! traveller, ‘ remember *now* thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, in which you shall say, you have no pleasure in them.’

Whatever your earthly treasures are, 'count them but as dross, that you may win Christ, and be found in him : ' then shall you be well provided for, though poor in this world ; for Christ's poor are ' rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom ; ' rich for both worlds, with ' durable riches and righteousness.'

Aged traveller, if hitherto this has not been your grand concern, surely it is now high time to take a serious retrospect of your past journeyings : yet, were your eye less dim than it is, it could no longer effectually penetrate yonder blue distance behind you, where lie hid the scenes of former activity ; and where, perhaps, many a fond hope sprang up, was nurtured and cherished, and withered ere matured : where you revelled in many a delight, or groaned under many a disappointment. Yes, once you were young ; once it was the seed-time of your future character, and in some degree of your future lot. What seeds were then sown ? Did parental culture perform its part ? or were you destitute of those inestimable

advantages? But, whether your opportunities were few or many, were such as you were favoured with, duly improved to the ends for which they were bestowed; or is there reason to regret the waste and neglect of them, now that they can neither be replaced nor recalled?

And what, too, are the emotions produced now in your bosom, respecting the memory of some of those with whom, when young, you conversed and acted, especially your near kindred, and the members of your family? Their failings and infirmities, which then, perhaps, appeared so prominent in your eye, now fade and grow indistinct; and are no more noticed than are the weeds that may be included in a fair landscape: while their virtues and amiable qualities, then in little esteem, spring up afresh to the imagination, and exhibit a beauty, and shed a balmy fragrance all around. Ah! the flowers you are now so liberally planting on their graves, had better have been strewed in their path!

But, traveller, you have no time to spare for useless regrets : the dead cannot be recalled ; neither can the false steps you may have taken be retrodden, nor lost opportunities regained : experience, dearly purchased experience, may, and frequently does, alter the views, and thus operates to the removal of injurious prejudices, and ultimately to the improvement of principles ; but if, aged traveller, it has not by this time, in some degree, produced these salutary effects on your mind and character, you have hitherto toiled through this wilderness to little purpose, and have an arduous task before you. May you recover strength to perform it ere ‘ you go hence, and are no more seen.’

If any of your present trials may be traced to early misconduct as their natural cause, the evil of sin and the superintending hand of Providence becomes strikingly apparent. ‘ Thus saith the Lord, The days shall come, when I will visit you with the rod of chastisement,’

was a message repeatedly sounded in the ears of a rebellious nation: but individuals are ever prone to forget, that over their own heads the same threatening hangs suspended; nevertheless they ultimately find it punctually executed, however long delayed and disregarded. It awaits them on the road at the precise point decreed by Infinite Wisdom, and brought about by Infinite Power. Their sins go before them like outriders, clearing the road of all that would hinder or impede, and preparing the very spot where they shall be arrested in their iniquitous career. This is applicable to the saint, in a great measure, as well as to the sinner; for although their God does not willingly afflict the children of his people, yet as they also ‘forsake his law, and break his commandments,’ he will not fail to visit even *their* iniquities with the rod, and *their* transgression with stripes.’

Traveller, should you now be under the rod of affliction, it behoves you seriously to enquire, in what instances you have

transgressed, and wherefore you are thus contended with. Are you one of those who have been furnished for your journey with every accommodation this wilderness affords, according to the sphere in which you moved ; sheltered by competence from the pitiless tempest, which you have so often witnessed beating on the head of others ? Then ask, in those times of need, have you stretched out the hand to their aid ; or have you moved on unconcerned, leaving them to pursue their dreary course as they could ? Say not your earthly goods were your own, to do with them as you pleased ; for you are now made to feel that they were not your own, but may be either taken away, or your enjoyment of them embittered, as the Sovereign Disposer sees best. If, on the contrary, you can adopt the language of righteous Job, uttered on a similar occasion, it is well ; for of whatever description your trials may be, how great is your advantage over those who, like yourself, are on the eve of departure from this wil-

derness, where they have so long travelled to no beneficial purpose! What an appalling change will shortly take place in their condition: moving at once from the costly mansion, or the compact dwelling, to the dark and silent grave, where there is nothing, at the very best, beyond the sculptured monument reared over their crumbling bones—its only embellishment the emblems of mortality, telling the sad tale of who once they were, and what now they are! What a desolate prospect has the aged worldling: no cheering hope for either world; his journey through this wilderness near its termination; each swelling wave of the river, on which he must shortly embark, threatening to bear him away to a country unknown! Ah! decrepid traveller, if those dashing waves appal you, if the thought of that unknown land makes you tremble, ‘and linger on the brink, and fear to launch away,’ yet even at this, the eleventh hour, there is hope: let, therefore, the time past suffice for

the course you have pursued ; and now, even now, ' flee for refuge to the hope set before you.'

Or are you one of those on whom the original curse has been literally fulfilled ; ever doomed to toil and eat your scanty morsel in the sweat of your brow ? and do you therefore infer that no account at all will be required at your hands ? How stand you affected towards this wilderness, such as *you* have found it to be ? Are you quite willing to depart from it ; not merely because you would escape its troubles, but from a well-grounded hope of being with Christ, which you know to be far better than any thing this world affords, even at its best estate ? From a retrospect of your past life and christian experience, can you say, with humbleness of mind and with thankfulness, ' I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of glory, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.' If indeed this should be your happy case,

then be of good cheer; but a few more weary steps, and all tears shall be wiped from your eyes, and 'the days of your mourning shall be ended.' And while you remain, although of gold and silver you may have none, either to give or to bequeath, you can still continue to dispense, from the treasures of past experience, those lessons of true wisdom for the benefit of the young, which are better than all riches. Remind them that, though once young like themselves, you are now grey-headed and infirm: invite them to consider the contrast: let them survey your earthly tenement, visibly decaying and crumbling to ruin, such as their own must become, unless a premature and unexpected gust should assail it, and up-tear it from the foundation. Happy you, if, yourself like a shock of corn ready to be housed, a few of the ripe ears should be gleaned by the younger around you, to allure them to seek the same grace; to convince them that 'blessed are the righteous, for it is well with them.' It is the

godly, the pious, the growing christian, who can with a glow of thankfulness say, 'I have been young, and now am old.' It will bring many a sweet recollection of that divine mercy which hath led them so many years through the vicissitudes of this wilderness; of that divine grace which has favoured them during the journey, with many an instance of pardon, forbearance, and renewed love.

Let the aged pilgrim abound, then, in these thankful recollections while he may; for in the future world it can no longer be said 'I now am old.' There all is perpetual youth, or rather perpetual manhood, through the countless ages of eternity. There the eyes shall not be dim, nor the natural force abated; 'being made like to his glorious body,' all shall be perfect, continuous, and 'shall never fade away.'

No. X.

Whither have ye made a road to day?

1 SAMUEL, chap. xxvii, ver. 10.

TRAVELLER, now the twilight is casting its sombre mantle over the busy scenes in which you have this day been engaged, thus affording you leisure for reflection, it may not be amiss to repose awhile, take a retrospect of the road you have passed, and examine the store you have there collected; of what description it is, and whether it has a fair promise of repaying you for the pains bestowed in its accumulation.

Has it indeed been one of those tranquil days, with which, by an indulgent providence, travellers even in this wilderness are sometimes indulged, to recruit 'the spirits which would otherwise fail before him, and the souls which he hath

made?' Have you alighted on a verdant spot, beneath a cloudless sky, with no enemy near to assail your peace or interrupt your enjoyment? This was a special season, a golden opportunity, to be seized with avidity, and not wasted in indolence: a cloudless sky affords no excuse for 'standing all the day idle;' and if the path has been thus pleasant and even, have you chosen to walk in it; or have you given the preference to that which was circuitous and indirect? This unhappy propensity habitually influences some tempers, even in their most common concerns; they seek after windings and intricacies, and mysterious ways, in all their movements: disdaining to let their eyes look straight on, they become entangled in mazes and labyrinths; thus, instead of making any progress, they frequently find themselves but arrived at the very spot from whence they first started, if not some paces behind it.

By that lengthened countenance and deep-drawn sigh, we may conjecture that

this has not been a tranquil day. Was it embittered by altercations, strifes, debates, and mutual criminations? But has the blame been all on your neighbour's side; the injury entirely on your own? Perhaps the path you chose was too narrow for two to walk in, unless they were perfectly agreed. Were you not aware of the intricacies of that wood, and the roughnesses of that heathy ground, which must naturally occasion uneasy contact? Why did you not pass by it and turn away? It is an insufficient excuse to plead, that you were urged on to that course; for wisdom commands us to cut off occasion from them that seek occasion. To gain our point and lose our temper, is unprofitable traffic: let us be especially watchful of those seasons when we are in danger of losing both.

Here is one traveller with a gayer countenance, indicating the acquirement of gain. I do not ask the amount, whether it was thirty, sixty, or an hundred fold: there is One who is perfectly acquainted

with it, and it will be fairly registered above. May it not be ranked with that gain, which eats into our peace as doth a canker !

But the most important question of all is, not what advantages you have gained, or what you have lost, in your secular affairs, or what road you have taken in the pursuit of worldly objects ; but whither have you made a road to-day in your spiritual progress ? Do you enquire what visible improvement can be expected in a single day, more than can be discerned in the features of your face from the operation of time, in so short a period ? The reply is ready : if you are but one day nearer the end of your race, should you not be that one day at least better prepared for its final issue ? Let this consideration stimulate to an habitual scrutiny into the actions, words, and thoughts of every single day. The thoughts, those multitudinous and busy roamers, should be ever thus interrogated, ere we close our eyes in sleep ; for by them we may discover our

own character, with an accuracy and precision unattainable by our most intimate friends. And when first these vagrants were emancipated from the bands of sleep, and reason offered to resume her reign, were these day-dreams invited and retained? Where were the thoughts suffered to speed their flight? Did they take the wings of the morning, that they might fly to the uttermost part of this earth; or, like the lark, did they soar to the skies, and warble their song of praise to the Creator, and beyond the birds' flight to the Redeemer?

'Bless, O my soul, the living God,
Call in thy thoughts that roam abroad.'

But whither have the affections made a road to day? There were many wide districts abounding with mercies; and, surely some view of present good, that might have excited gratitude, notwithstanding the weeds and barren tracks that obtrude: especially are there no covenant blessings stored up beyond what the eye can see? The christian traveller contemplates, with the eye of faith, the flowing river, and

the verdant groves on its bank ; the luscious fruit, and the interminable prospect ; and finds it well adapted to stay the vagrant imagination, and to rouse the spiritual affections, fixing them upon those things 'that cannot be moved.'

But when our sun is finally setting, and the day of life is drawing to its close ; then, O my soul, 'whither hast thou made a road to day ?' will be a question of tremendous importance ! Have I mixed with the crowd, followed the multitude, taken up my rest in this wilderness, not like a pilgrim passing onward to a better country, but as though I were a permanent inhabitant here ; ever complaining of the daily crosses which assail me ; yet neither seeking for the only efficient support under them, nor looking beyond them with patience and with hope ?

But view that traveller with a placid smile on his countenance : though feeble in body, surely he is mighty in soul. In the way in which he has made a road he is no stranger. He is rich in his hopes,

varied in his experiences; he is not weary of the world, but is waiting for his salvation; impressed with a sense of present mercies, to which plodders in this wilderness are utter strangers, and daily pondering the faithful promises, he is patiently looking for the time when the master shall come to summon him away.

Traveller, whatever be your character, these solemn subjects will force themselves on your attention sooner or later, whether or not *you* have performed the task for which alone you were placed in this wilderness and bid to travel there. 'The night, the long night is fast approaching, when no man can work.' Be it therefore your care, to watch well the excursions of every passing day, and see whether they be such as conscience approves; such as you can render up a good account of at the last. If, this day, you have been betrayed into forbidden paths, resolve, by the aid of divine grace, to be more circumspect on the morrow; and ever ponder the paths

of your feet, before they wander in a dubious way : so at the end of your course you shall be able to gird up your loins, nor shrink back at the rolling waters of Jordan ; for they shall soon land you on the opposite side, where all these painful wanderings will be ended ; where there shall be no more toilsome days, by which to measure and estimate your work and labour ; no setting sun, no evening shade ; for ‘ there shall be no night there.’

Ask of some bright spirit, traversing those stellar regions, ‘ Whither hast thou made a road to day ?’ Into what district of past providence, into what revelation of future joy ? What has been the topic of the anthems of praise—what the subject of your converse with kindred spirits on that splendid hill of brightness ? But the reply would be unintelligible ; yet I can discern a smiling beckon, saying ‘ Come up hither.’ I come, I come : ‘ Saviour, keep me to thy kingdom and glory.’

No. XI.

From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when
my heart is overwhelmed : lead me to the rock that is
higher than I.

PSALM lxi, ver. 2.

AH ! what apparently interminable lengths
of burning sand fatigue the eye, and stretch
the dreary prospect all around. Not a
shady grove is to be seen, nor a single tree,
to afford a momentary shelter : the fierce
sunbeams strike on the weary pilgrim's
head ; and he must sustain the intensity
of their heat, or sink under their efful-
gence, according to the degree of his
strength, or his powers of endurance.
The land of our pilgrimage, were it a suc-
cession of verdant meadows, or did the
pathway wind round the deeply browned

wood, we should no longer be travellers in a *wilderness*; but a wilderness it has been termed by those who have passed through it in all ages.

Yet the wilderness itself has its own appropriate alleviations; the very rocks which contribute to the wildness of its aspect, furnish it also with its cooling shades:—so, from the most gloomy appearances and unpromising events, the sweetest solace is sometimes derived; the most appalling providences have been productive of essential benefits; and blessings, little anticipated by the desponding mind, have followed in their rear. Some friend has proffered unexpected assistance, or at least has assuaged the keenness of suffering by a well-timed sympathy; or a sudden termination has been put to calamities, which had appeared boundless and insurmountable. Some latent power shall be called into activity for the occasion, by him who has the mind under his sovereign controul, and can make it the instrument to accom-

plish all his pleasure. Yes, it is refreshing even thus to repose in the cool shade, to experience comparative ease, to feel the invigoration of hope, and to lie quiet for a while, as under the shadow of a rock. With such respites the weary traveller is occasionally indulged, that he may gain renewed vigour for the impending accidents of his journey.

But the true Christian, while grateful to his Divine Benefactor for these alleviations under suffering, cannot be thus satisfied: the minds of all the sons and daughters of affliction must flee to a divine refuge, if they would not be utterly consumed in this howling wilderness. The Psalmist, in his distresses, exclaims, ‘Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.’ But no earthly resources answer to this character: they are destitute of that in which a mortal can repose unlimited confidence; they are no higher than ourselves; nor have they essentially more power, or longer endurance than ourselves. A rock so small, so low, yields but partial

shelter; unlike the tall, towering precipice, or the mountain brow, where the shade is deep, effective, and wide spread. Here the way-worn traveller may repose with confidence, and have all his feelings soothed to quietness and rest. Such a rock is the ever blessed God — the rock of ages ;—‘ that rock was Christ.’ Yes, the protection he affords is, in truth, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land ; an effective shelter from the storm, and a covert from the tempest, which will never disappoint the hopes of those who take refuge there. Of all the consolations this wilderness has to offer to the deeply afflicted spirit, it may truly be said, ‘ Miserable comforters are ye all.’ Neither the dissipations of the world, nor the best efforts of friendship, can heal the heart that is deeply wounded.

But how dreary the prospect of him who, convinced of his danger as an offender against the divine law proclaimed amid the thunders of Sinai, sees no way of escape from threatened destruction !—

Then, a view of the great atonement for sin—the Lamb of God, whose blood removes the curse—revives the spirit; and the self-condemned and trembling sinner may well exclaim, “This is a rock indeed, and it is higher than I. The shade it affords is sweetly refreshing to my sorrowing soul. My panting bosom recovers its serenity; my reviving appetite feasts on the bread of life, and drinks copious draughts of the waters which flow from this hallowed source. I sit under this shadow with great delight: it is high as heaven; what can mine enemies do to deprive me of its benefits? This is my rock and refuge, my fortress and my high tower—‘all my springs are in thee.’”

And while the natural man pursues his dreary way and perceives not this shelter, but betakes himself to every refuge except that which alone could ensure his safety, and often deems himself secure when he is most exposed, God is leading his chosen people by a right way—‘He

will keep the feet of his saints while the wicked are silent in darkness.'

Under all circumstances, the wishes of the spiritual pilgrim will veer towards this divine shelter; frequent will be the seasons of exhaustion and fatigue, when he will seek this refreshing shade; when he will say, I remember thee from the land of the Hermonites and from the hill Misar—this is a pelting storm—this is an oppressive heat—'Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.'

Higher than I! Yes, blessed Redeemer, it is thy fulness, thy might, thy divine influence, which attract my feebleness to take shelter under thee. Thy righteousness displays a spotless purity—shines with a celestial brilliancy; so that I turn from the creature all around, and from myself, and flee for refuge where alone it can ever be found.

Higher than I! Divine Mediator, thou canst lay thine hand where I dare not approach, even on the very throne of the

Most High; undertake thou for me, and plead my cause!

Higher than I! yes, in yon bright vault of heaven He dwells, and makes perpetual day by His divine presence: there is no need of the sun where He so brilliantly shines; there no heat shall smite by day, nor any weariness, sickness, sin, or sorrow come: O, then, 'lead me to that rock which is higher than I.'

No. XI.

Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they
live for ever?

ZECARIAH, chap. i, ver. 5.

ALTHOUGH this solemn appeal is ever soliciting the attention of mankind; assailing their ears by every passing bell, their eyes by every green hillock, and every white stone in the burial ground; accosting their personal feelings in every pain, and every symptom of decay; yet we see the multitude of travellers as busily occupied with their various pursuits as if such solemn and numerous mementos had never been presented to them; amply confirming the sentiment of the poet—

“ All men think all men mortal, but themselves.”

They turn and admire the monuments, reared by hands which have long since forgotten their cunning, and, like those whose memory they were designed to perpetuate, themselves hastening to decay : — monuments of those who are now in a state of being, respecting which in their day of life perhaps they took but little interest, and which of all concerns engrossed the least portion of their thoughts : for as

“ That bourne, from whence no traveller returns,”

is concealed from mortal view, every expedient is resorted to, that may still more effectually suppress and stifle the obtruding subject, and remove the unwelcome thought far from the mind.

But, traveller, permit the interesting question to be repeated : ‘ *Your fathers, where are they?*’ Where is your immediate father? or his father? And who and what were their predecessors? Of what country? Of what rank? Of what character? You cannot tell, beyond the

extent of a few—a very few generations. Your genealogy is lost; for in every passing year Time continues to erase the annals into which you would curiously pry. Of those of your ancestors who are ignorant of you, you are equally ignorant, although they once lived and moved, and acted their busy parts in this journey of the desert, as intensely occupied with their various pursuits as its present inhabitants are. But they, with their concerns, are lost in oblivion. ‘The place that once knew them, knows them no more for ever.’ O! that it should come to this! That they who traversed this wilderness in all directions; who industriously explored its secret recesses, its mountains and its caverns, its hills and its vales, and who, in search of hidden treasure, left no place unattempted; who were involved in disputes and contentions; who were sustaining or inflicting injuries; who were the oppressors or the oppressed; who planted and plucked up; who builded and brake down; who wept, and laughed, and

mourned, and danced ; who gained and lost ; who kept and cast away ; who hated and who loved ; — should now be silent in utter darkness, and not a vestige of them remain !

‘ Your fathers, where are they ? ’ Our Lord assures us, that ‘ strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it : ’ if so, it might be inferred of our departed ancestors, that the number of those who have found that way is comparatively small. So far the Scriptures favour the general inference : but of individuals, we have no right or authority to judge ; nor can it be of any advantage to the living, to pronounce on the state of the dead, under any circumstances whatever. We certainly know that it shall be well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked ; but as we cannot, with equal certainty, know to which of these classes any individual will be found to belong, decency and humanity alike forbid our passing

sentence, even in cases where our fears preponderate. They have for ever done with us ; and in this sense we should for ever have done with them : ‘ to their own master they stand or fall ’ — ‘ who doth not give account of any of his matters ’ — ‘ whose ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts.’ This will be evidenced on that day, when many a one who had been condemned by his fellow-mortals, will lift up his head before men and angels, and appear at the right hand of the Judge : while others will be missing there, who maintained a fair reputation, and stood high in the opinion of all around.

‘ Our fathers, where are they ?’ Let not the question be asked in the tone of doubting infidelity ; they are somewhere, though we cannot perceive them : the cold grave retains only their mouldering flesh ; the immortal spirit returns to him who gave it, to receive according to the deeds done in the body ; to associate with kindred spirits, good or evil, till the

last trump shall sound, and the full reward, either of demerit or of grace, shall be authoritatively adjudged. The body, though hid for a season, is committed to the grave but in trust : it shall rise again, either to the resurrection of the just, or to the resurrection of final disgrace and perdition.

‘ Our fathers, where are they ? ’ We cannot tell. Let us be especially solicitous ‘ to make our own calling and election sure ; ’ to shun the downward path of the many, and to follow the few who have left us good reason to hope that, through faith and patience, they are now inheriting the promises ; ’ so that should our posterity be asked concerning us, ‘ Your fathers, where are they ? ’ the ready answer may be founded on a life of uniform piety. Jesus they trusted and loved ; in Him they approached the Father, for the supply of all their wants spiritual and temporal, during their perilous journey through this wilderness ; to Him they looked for support and safe conduct when

departing out of it; and as the grace they sought never failed, they claim it in that upper world, that heavenly Canaan, and 'are ever with the Lord.'

'The prophets, do they live for ever?' God hath sent forth those his servants, from age to age, to instil into the degenerate children of men the solemn and important truths on which depend their present as well as their future well being: they have, at their own peril, faithfully delivered these high behests; many of them, in pursuit of this grand object, 'wandering about this wilderness, in sheep's skins and goats' skins, living in dens and caves of the earth, destitute, afflicted, tormented,' till released by their Great Master from their toils and sufferings, and summoned away to receive from his hand their final reward. O! how will the successive generations of these holy men, who were rising early and going forth with their message to a guilty world, appear in the judgment against those who despised the counsel with which they

were charged, and would none of their reproof.

‘The prophets, do they live for ever?’ Yes, never doubt it; they are servants of him who has said, ‘Those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.’ Men slew them because they hated their testimony, and wished to be rid for ever of their criminating influence. But Herod and Herodias will have to meet John again, and stand up amid a host of persecutors, to face the noble army of martyrs, under the full weight of self-condemnation;—when they would gladly undergo the sufferings they once so relentlessly inflicted, might they but put a period to their own existence: but though they should seek death, they shall not find it.

‘Do the prophets live for ever?’ Alas! the sinner knows not how soon he may be deprived of the means of his salvation; how soon those lips may be sealed in death, that are now earnestly proclaiming to him the way of life; or how soon himself may be summoned away to an-

swer for these despised means and neglected opportunities.

Perhaps, traveller, those fathers and those prophets with whom you were once familiar, and who were zealous in sounding this important message in your ears, are already fallen asleep, and are now inhabitants of that land towards which they aimed to guide your wandering steps. O ! that you may yet discover the path to which they directed you : for all those labours in which you are now so earnestly engaged under the sun, and to which you are giving so unwise a preference, will soon be utterly forgotten, and of no account at all. Posterity will advance in regular succession down the stream of time, leaving all their predecessors lost in the distance : but should your name be written in heaven, then you will be had in everlasting remembrance, and live indeed for ever.

‘ The prophets, do they live for ever ? ’
Could this question be asked in heaven, it would bring a gloom over that cloudless

sky : but those happy souls, once admitted, have a noble permanency, like the pillars of the temple of our God ; ‘ they can go no more out.’ There the prophets live for ever, amid the countless hosts of those who listened to their testimony ; there they live, enjoying the light of His countenance in whose name they prophesied ; beholding the fulfilment of their predictions in the operations of grace, and wondering at that more than fulfilment which shines in glory.

No. XII.

Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's land-mark.

DEUT. chap. xxvii, ver. 17.

THERE are more ways of incurring this denunciation than by the flagrant crime of infringing on our neighbour's domains ; for while we are walking erect in proud integrity, imagining that the threat has nothing to do with us nor we with it, would we but permit ourselves to take a cool and dispassionate survey of those common rights which are perfectly distinct from what is called personal property, but equally valuable and equally sacred, memory might often furnish us with instances in which we have decidedly encroached on them, in the inroads we have made on the peace and happiness of our neighbour. These sacred rights are commensurate with all the various relations of

life, are entwined with every day's occurrences, and make their imperious demand with almost every passing hour. We are each of us entrenched within a righteous code of laws, enacted by the great Law-giver, who best knows our respective claims, and who has furnished us with the most ample means of so understanding them, by a fair transcript within our own bosoms, as that we shall be without excuse if we presume to transgress them. This golden rule is so legible, that he who runs may read: it admits of no abatement in any case; but peremptorily requires, that what we claim, or are conscious we should claim if we were precisely in the circumstances of another, is his unquestionable due; and if we withhold this, and invade his just rights, we incur the guilt of removing our neighbour's land-mark.

Now, traveller, if happily you are not in arrears; if no one abroad or at home has any demand on you; pursue your way in conscious integrity: otherwise slacken your pace for a moment, and, instead of

adding to the long catalogue of your complaints of the world, inquire in what respects the world might retort the charge; whether, in your turn, you may not have transgressed the bounds prescribed for you by the wise and benign Ruler of mankind. Take neither a too general, nor a too partial survey; but strictly examine your own conduct, with the motives from which it emanated: do it as impartially as you would that of your neighbour; and then determine whether there may not at least have been some occasion on which, almost imperceptibly, you have trespassed on his bounds. Have you never aimed to exalt your own character at the expense of his; or at all sacrificed his comfort or his feelings to your own convenience, or prejudice, or caprice — to some spoiled bantling of your own, which is suffered to tyrannize over and molest and disturb all who are so unfortunate as to come in its way? Or, is there no favourite corner in your domains, which must be extended, and the landmark

moved on, and on, till the just bounds of your neighbour are rendered indistinct and indefinable? This injustice is practised in a thousand ways, to which our nearest connexions are the most exposed. It is not so much the tent of the traveller we pass on the road, as that which from necessity is pitched near us, which is most liable to encroachment. These trespasses, however, are not ultimately successful: in due time, Providence will wring from such trespassers the reluctant confession, or strike home the inward conviction, 'that he that doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong that he hath done.' Experience exhibits this truth to every one's observation, in instances innumerable. What are deemed trifling encroachments by those who practise them, are strictly observed by Him, who even takes cognizance of the sparrow that falleth to the ground, and who will not suffer, with impunity, the happiness of any of his creatures to be wantonly or carelessly destroyed. Those

who would avoid the penalty attached to every description of this crime, a penalty which involves no less than a *curse*, would take the wisest course, by resolving that where they have so done they will make restitution four-fold. Many would willingly submit to this to escape a legal process, who nevertheless obstinately persevere in that conduct which exposes them to this tremendous malediction; unconscious that, perhaps, at the very moment they are thus trespassing, they may be under its silent operation; yet ever inclined to attribute the various trials and calamities by which they suffer to any cause, rather than to the Almighty hand which inflicts the merited retribution.

Perhaps this general statement will suffer many to escape conviction, to whom that conviction would be both just and beneficial. Let us particularize in a few instances; the actual occurrences of life are too numerous to be every one specified.

There are bounds set about each individual's private concerns, which ought to be sacredly regarded by his neighbours : the power to peep through his fences may be a temptation to many ; but the truly conscientious will ever have a blind eye and a deaf ear on such occasions : unlike the impertinent, who, prying into his neighbour's concerns, wonders where he is going, and what he did when he went. This is certainly encroaching on the land-mark which should guard the private concerns of individuals from inspection, although it may not bring the offender under the penalty of any law. If to this impertinent curiosity be added, as is too frequently the case, the spirit of tattle, which delights in reporting all that is seen, heard, understood, or supposed, the trespass is of still greater magnitude : detraction, while removing the land-mark, renders barren, or rather productive of noxious weeds, many a fair plot of our natural inheritance.

Envy too is ever busy in such operations. Numberless are the occasions calculated

to excite this baneful passion. It loves to crib now and then a portion, as opportunity may offer, from a neighbour's domain, till the whole is reduced to dimensions of its own fixing; while Jealousy, its sister, which is ever imagining some sinister design against its own possessions, frequently assists in these nocturnal depredations.

Ambition has higher aims: it would part with silver and gold; it would relinquish estates; but then it demands more than an equivalent in power. On its neighbour's land-mark is inscribed in legible characters, 'I have a right to do as I will with my own.' But without shewing how the great and mighty of the earth generally dislike such inscriptions, it may be more to the purpose to contemplate those lesser beings, who love to domineer and lord it around them, in the true spirit of all the heroes, from Alexander the Great, to Alexander the Coppersmith. The continual teasing of the members of a family, each and all to have his, and her, and their own way, when all the merit of the case

lies in its being 'my own convenience,' or 'my own opinion,' frequently operates to the tearing up every land-mark, and abandoning the whole domain to discord and desolation.

Mere caprice, which is deemed of such trifling importance, will frequently produce mischiefs as dire as the most insatiable ambition and the love of sway; and not the less so when the kindly affections of those around are disposed to humour and accommodate it.

Live in thy lot : observe its bounds ;

For God hath drawn the line.

That persecutors, who wish to force conscience, are grievous offenders against this rule, will be readily admitted; yet the spirit of persecution is frequently too manifest, where the name is held in abhorrence. How many of those who are in dependent circumstances have to endure cruel mockings, or illiberal restraints, on the ground of their religious opinions and their conscientious performances !

If to remove our *neighbour's* land-mark

be thus criminal, what form of expression can adequately stigmatize that spirit, which so operates against God? Yet how is His time, claimed for devotional duties, encroached upon! How are His sabbaths profaned! How is that heart, to which He has the sole right, occupied by vain thoughts, possessed by a corrupt world, or sacrilegiously given up to Satan! Traveller, art thou one of those, who have thus removed His land-mark, till nothing is left to Him but a few cold ceremonies, and those perhaps decreasing every day?

No. XIV.

The days of our years are threescore years and ten.

PSALM xc, ver. 10.

WHAT is yonder merry group, who are shouting and gamboling about the wilderness, as though it were an Eden; pursuing butterflies, culling flowers, laughing and weeping with the humour and caprice of the moment? They are successively arriving at the first stage of their journey. On some of them ten returning springs have shed their gentle influence; they grow up like fair plants, in whom sunshine is gradually unfurling the timid leaves, expanding the tender blossoms, and affording a fair promise of future produce. Of their ensuing journey, these sportive beings anticipate no ill: past experience furnishes them with few warnings; or at best such as are soon forgotten

—put to flight by the first vanity that flits before them : with hope to stimulate them, their expectations of the future are filled only with gay illusions ; absorbed in the present, its transient sorrows and its joys, they heed not the times to come ; and but for the irksome task which begins now to be imposed, they would, as far as it is possible to those who inhabit a wilderness, be happy mortals. ‘ When I was a child, I spake as a child, I thought as a child ;’ and the season is not yet arrived, in which they are expected to ‘ put away childish things.’ Such is man at the commencement of his course : Such, fellow-traveller, were you and I. Let it be our ambition not to remain such ; not to retain the character of childhood by resisting the wholesome discipline under which we may be brought, and by inattention to the various lessons wisely selected by our heavenly Father for our instruction and future guidance.

But here comes another group, dancing on. Let us stand aside while they pass

or probably we may be incommoded by the contact. You look anxiously : solicitude and apprehension for the fate of some of them cloud your brow, as you mark how heedlessly they speed their way. Ah ! there is one timidly looking round, as if seeking a guide : he has heard some warning voice, and he has taken the alarm ; let us then proffer our aid. And there is another too, equally aware of his peril and need, and equally desirous of an assisting hand. But although you should ‘cry aloud, and lift up your voice like a trumpet,’ behold, what fearful multitudes there are, now at the commencement of their journey, when they are totally unacquainted with the perils of the way — now, at this most eventful of all periods, — to whom every remonstrance will prove as the jingling of brass and the tinkling of the cymbal. They have just arrived at their second stage : twenty summers’ suns have shone on their heads, and ripened them thus far towards maturity ; a small portion of

time, in their estimation, compared with that which they anticipate as still in reserve; nevertheless it swells to vast importance when their wisdom and their stock of experience is questioned: then it is deemed amply sufficient to direct them in all their exigencies. Education, irksome education, is now at an end; nor dream they of that which is but commencing; that new discipline under which they are presently to be brought, whether they will bend to it or not. 'Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the ways of thy youth, and walk in the sight of thine eyes; but, know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.'

And here some approach, who maintain a steadier pace. Traveller, it behoves us now to be sparing of our interference; for, lo! they have arrived at the third stage of their journey; and, from having travelled thus far, draw the sage conclusion that *they* must now be competently

furnished and prepared for every contingency. Yet let us venture, at least, to point them to the mile-stone on the road as furnishing a seasonable hint. Traveller! traveller! see you those figures? Thirty years of thy mortal life are gone by, and for ever fled! Soberly reflect on the probable residue that remains. Ah! what is the reply? 'I have bought a yoke of oxen, and must needs go and prove them.' Another pleads, 'I have married a wife, and cannot now tarry to consider the mile-stone; perhaps at the next stage I may have more leisure.' So be it. To us they refuse to listen; 'their feet are entangled in a net, and they walk on a snare.'

Behold, in their rear, another company advances, who have arrived at their fourth stage. Observe at what a sober pace they generally pursue their way. Already some of them seem faint and weary. Traveller, what, during the last stage, has betided you, so to alter your gait, and to change your aspect? You are unlike

those of your company, who seem disposed to make a stand here and regale themselves ; reluctant to advance a step further, did not Time urge them on ; pityless, relentless Time, who appeared at the commencement of their course to be so tardy, now seems to fly on rapid wing ; although he still pursues an equal pace, conducting them down the gentle, and almost imperceptible declivity of life : yet would they fain retard his progress, surrounded as they are with blooming families, from the smiling cherub on its mother's knee, to the sportive and happy being, just emerging from childhood, and trying his prowess in a thousand interesting ways. The sanguine parent watches their progress, and would fain anticipate among them, the future stay and support of his declining years. 'These,' he fondly says 'shall prove the solace of my age, support my feeble steps along the gloomy vale of life, and finally close these eyes, which have so often gazed on them with delight.' Amen, traveller ; so

be it: but, that your hopes may be realised, fail not still to watch their steps and their goings with unremitting care; or you may have sad occasion to bewail the fallacy of these your flattering hopes and expectations.

And now those of the fifth stage approach, moving on with sedate and sober pace; for fifty golden Autumns have crowned their passing years, and brought them thus far through the wilderness. How fare you, fellow-traveller; and those flourishing olive-plants, of which you spoke—how and where are they? “Alas! ask me not, some of them are withered and gone! Joseph is not; and Simeon is not. Surely all these things *are* against me. Ah! when I turn, and take a survey of the road, along which I have already laboured and toiled, how different its aspect from my early views of it! Is the scene changed, or am I? One or the other is unquestionably changed, even since the last stage; how are some at least of my views altered during this short

period. Experience by this time has accumulated and more forcibly assists in the process. Must my education and my journey through this wilderness terminate together? O! that I could retrace at least some of my steps! How very differently should they be directed. But, alas! I cannot tread them over again: the soles of my feet shall never traverse that road more; let me then more steadily pursue my remaining course, and derive wisdom from the past, for the direction of my remaining way."

And if, fellow-traveller, those days which yet remain to you shall be occupied in erecting your house on a rock, so that, when the stormy winds shall blow and the rain descend and beat on that house, it may be proof against the tempest, it is well. Surely, at this advanced stage of your journey, your schemes are not still to plant in this wilderness, or to pluck up that which is planted; to pull down, or to build upon this barren waste; towards the utmost verge of which you are so swiftly

speeding your way. If such are your chief plans, let them at least bear some proportion to the probable terms of occupancy ; unless you should have a certain lease of possession for ten or twenty years to come. In what state are your barns ? Are they well stocked and stored ? soundly built, and proof against wind and weather ? Are the foundations strong and the building throughout firm and free from dilapidations, neither inclining to the right nor to the left ; no mouldering or tottering ; no breaches in the roof, nor cracks in the walls ? Then take your ease and enjoy the fruits of your toils. But does the comparison hold in all respects with the frail body of him who owns them ? Already are not some of the pins loosened ; and does not the fabric begin to totter ? Or if, as yet, the structure remains firm and entire, for how many bleak winters yet to come, think you, will it remain impervious to the blast ? Perhaps some rude shock may even now be on its way, to effect that which no

human skill can repair, and inflict a ruin final and irretrievable, except by the renovating blast of the last trumpet!

See you not those withered arms, still uplifted, catching at every spray, and clinging to every object they meet, as though it were an entire novelty; although time is visibly employed in loosening their grasp, and death stands waiting his commission to inflict the final blow. Can it be that these have arrived at the sixth stage of their journey! are they laden with the experience of so many winters; or have they carelessly left it behind them on the road, and now come in, forlorn and destitute, as though they had been plundered? 'O! that men were wise,'—'that such dying men were wise,' and would now at last 'consider their latter end.'

And now, in the rear, advance a few, a very few travellers, still with feeble steps pursuing their toilsome way: it cannot be termed a group; for they are as thinly scattered abroad as are the silver

hairs on their own foreheads. Seventy winters have been gradually whitening those scanty locks, bending those once erect forms, and enfeebling those once agile limbs. To a favoured few, past scenes appear indeed in their true light — ‘as a tale that is told; as a watch in the night.’ Hear you, among them, that plaintive moan? What says it? My house is not so with God; yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.’ Ah! traveller, there are many such houses — many, where the heads of them have not this consolation; but be you of good cheer: a few more weary steps, and you shall look back on this your pilgrimage, and say, ‘Of a truth he hath led me by a *right way* to a city of habitation.’ Therefore gird up your loins; yet a little while, and ‘all tears shall be wiped from your eyes, and the days of your mourning shall be ended.’

Learn, fellow-traveller, at whatever stage you are now arrived, that as you

have in some degree yet found it, so it will still continue to be, a howling wilderness, a wearisome journey, notwithstanding the resting-places and refreshments with which you are occasionally indulged. So it proved to Israel; but they were travelling towards a better country: this gave them patience and courage; this crowned their labours, and amply rewarded all their toils, though the thorns, and the drought, and the fiery flying serpents were in their way. They expected not an Elim at every turn: and an Eden, they knew, could not on any track be found. Thus the christian traveller looks forward to Canaan's happy land, where he shall feel no more the long toils of the sultry desert; and where, having got beyond Jordan, he shall ascend the hill of Zion, and enter upon the possession of his 'exceeding great reward.'

No. XV

The way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

PSALM cxlvi, 9.

WHAT a different aspect would this wilderness wear, through which our passage lies, did that description of travellers, who by divine wisdom are termed the *wicked*, duly estimate the tremendous consequences attached to that character! Were they to look no further than their temporal interests, it might well have a visible operation on their ways, and on their works, and produce a striking change in all we observe around us. They would hesitate ere they ventured to erect those edifices of pride, of ambition, and of covetousness, at the price of so much toil on their own part, and frequently of so much suffering on the part of others, could they be convinced that these towers and

bulwarks would ultimately be rased to the foundation, and their lofty summits levelled with the dust, by him 'whose counsel alone shall stand, and who will do all his pleasure.'

Let every busy traveller pause, and enquire, to which of these classes he belongs — the *righteous*, or the *wicked*; whether he deliberately chooses to be ranked with those who live without God in the world — with those whose unholy walk is in direct opposition to his righteous commands; whether, as the openly profane, the worldly, the sensual, the formal, or the hypocritical. Self-flattery may disclaim any of these characters; yet many a lofty tower of self-opinion is thus raised, which shall not abide in the day of trial. These egregious claims shall be turned upside down; for although 'the way of a fool is right in his own eyes, it is the Lord who pondereth his goings.'

Behold yonder causeway. See how it is crowded and thronged! It is the high road of pride! No wonder that they do

not pursue their journey quietly. Observe that strange figure walking so erect and stately, and looking with an expression of scorn and contempt on all around him. What are those gaudy trappings with which he is decked, and which he surveys with such evident self-complacency? to many of the crowd they are enigmatical—not to be deciphered or explained. All things that walk, and fly, and swim, and creep, are put in requisition, to announce to the inquisitive gazer that this is a man of family! to display the good (perchance the bad) deeds of his ancestors; deeds in which this all-important being had no share; and who, therefore, might as justly be stigmatized for the one, as honoured for the other. ‘God hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth;’ and although he hath chosen by his providence to exalt some and to depress others, he will manifest himself to be no respecter of persons, on that day, when each individual shall not be recognized by the emblazoned escutcheons he could

display to the gaze of his admiring fellow-mortals, nor honoured for the mighty deeds of his ancestors, but treated strictly and impartially according to his own. When these gaudy trappings are stripped from the gloomy hearse, and the hatchment is taken down from the dwelling, they will have performed their last offices for him ; and if such transient honours as these things can bestow were the primary object of his affection, he will find, when it is too late, his towering projects swept away like the spider's web, and all his lofty schemes of pride and aggrandizement turned upside down.

The emphatic sentence is written in characters never to be erased 'Them that honour me, I will honour.' And when the great and the noble manifest themselves, by their conduct and character, to be the subjects of that high distinction, let us cordially render them the tribute due ; nor with plebeian feeling withhold that respect and homage to rank and station, which it rightfully demands, even

when it is not thus adorned. The good qualities of those who are at once noble by rank and by virtue, are ‘like apples of gold in pictures of silver.’ Those only are objects of contempt, (though it may not be our business to manifest it,) whose sole claim to respect consists in the fishes, or the birds, or the beasts — *passant*, *couchant*, and *rampant*, which they have the right to pourtray upon their stuff, and which, in some instances, is their principal passport into society.

Traveller, what mark of distinction have you? Are such vanities as these all your boast? or are you reckoned among the company of those who have the seal of the Lamb on their foreheads, ‘who are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light?’ Then whatever be your rank and degree while a sojourner in this wilderness, the time is approaching, when in glory and in

dignity, you shall transcend the brightest stars in the firmament of heaven.

But what shall be said to those men of wealth, which has not been said to their predecessors? Riches have increased, and in defiance of the divine mandate they still persist in setting their hearts upon them. But observe the catastrophe: these very riches often 'make to themselves wings and fly away, as an eagle towards heaven.' So frequently does this befall the possessors of wealth, that they have no warrant to say, even of to-morrow, 'It shall be as this day;' because death may come in an hour unlooked for, and strip them of all: or the dispensations of Providence, as is sometimes the case, by a slow and almost imperceptible process, may diminish and waste the amplest portions, till they are at length annihilated: or, while plenty abounds and the cup is running over, it shall suddenly be turned upside down and emptied; leaving the owner to exclaim, 'Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more!'

And here advances Beauty, with her witcheries, mincing with her feet, and exacting admiration of all she meets. Shall we by a hackneyed and unavailing admonition endeavour to humble her pretensions, and to cast a veil over that face so fair? It will not do: it has been tried in vain, ever since there were sages to moralize, and fair faces, and mirrors to reflect them. Let them alone: time is doing his office; his operations too, though silent and imperceptible, are persevering and indefatigable. He will assuredly write the impressive lesson in characters legible and indelible on every feature: in the mean while neither the ravages of time nor heaven's chastisements, nor death's solemn knell, shall be able to enforce the salutary lesson, unless it be accompanied by that renovating influence, which alone can gain access to the heart, and which gives beauty for deformity; a beauty and a comeliness which shall never decay, or be impaired by endless ages.

If pride of ancestry, wealth, or beauty,

which is too often regarded as a mere human frailty, and trivial folly, is nevertheless a mark of ungodliness, and as such is stigmatized by the divine word, what reason have they who are chargeable with more flagrant vices to tremble! The schemes of the deceitful, the cruel, the lascivious, the oppressive, the dishonest, the rebellious, are frequently deep laid; their plans powerfully supported; their success apparently complete: yet is their whole procedure known, and easily defeated by him, who sets his frowning face against all iniquity, and whose high hand is able to overturn the best concerted schemes, and the deepest laid projects. Let the example of Saul and Ahab, of Ananias and Sapphira, of Judas and Demas, warn the ungodly, as with a voice from amid the ruins of this iniquity.

But, fellow-traveller, what have you, and what have I to boast? Are we in possession of none of the things for which we see so many of those around us sacrificing their best, their immortal in-

terests? And do we, therefore, assume a superiority on account of the little value we set on those objects which are beyond our reach? But of all our store (and surely we have some store) is there nothing to which our affections are too fondly attached? It is the ruling principle within, not the value of the external object, by which we must judge of ourselves. Deep hidden in the bosom, there may be fostered some idol, unseen except by one eye, which must be dragged from thence, ere we can presume to separate ourselves from the crowd with a good grace, or can have any just right to censure their more open and flagrant follies. Whatever they do, let us descend into yonder healthful vale, the vale of humility: there we shall find the atmosphere salubrious, and well adapted to heal the numerous diseases of the mind; there our mental vision will be strengthened and improved, so that we shall distinctly perceive the real value of those things which have been the objects of *our* pur-

suit, and discover, perhaps, that we have been not less criminal than many around us, whom we have been forward to condemn: we may anticipate disappointment and chagrin, as awaiting us also; and we may ultimately find, that these idols of our hearts may be the very things selected for the instruments of our correction: the Sovereign Disposer may utterly reverse and turn them upside down, when we are thinking ourselves most secure. O! that men were wise; that they understood these things! But they are too intent on their own works to observe the works of *his* hands, or to let the Divine operations, the result of which is ever before them, influence and regulate their own, and render them such as he will establish, approve, and bless. They may obstinately persevere in their favourite course, till those over whom they exalted themselves shall at length get above them very high, and they shall come down very low; as the Lord would have 'rejoiced over them to do them good, so he

will rejoice over them to bring them to nought.' ' Say unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him,' for the way of the ungodly shall be turned upside down.'

No. XVI.

I dwell among my own people.

2 KINGS, chap. iv, ver. 13.

IT was never intended by the Great Author of our being, and the Sovereign Disposer of our concerns, that we should travel along this perilous wilderness, solitary, without companion or friend ; but it is only those individual families, societies, and communities, who dwell together in unity, that truly fulfil the Divine intentions in thus assembling them together, and enduing them with social propensities. It is but a fair inference from the story, that the family and connexions of the Shunamite were thus happily united, or she would not have so replied to an overture, which would have been seized by many, among whomsoever they had

dwelt, with eagerness and avidity : but no such ambition appears to have infested the bosom of this female ; no desire to attract notice, or to be raised above the rank and sphere in which Providence had placed her. Her ambition seems to have been like his, who said, ‘ Give me neither poverty nor riches ; feed me with food convenient for me.’ This habitual contentment, under circumstances not in themselves desirable, was still further evidenced in her appeal to the Prophet on the loss of her only child — ‘ Did I desire a son of my Lord ?’ — and eminently so, in her resignation, when bereaved of him, which enabled her to say, while smarting under the pangs of separation, ‘ It is well.’ Indeed, the general tenor of her conduct is fraught with an impressive lesson, not merely to individuals, but to families, who can experience such happiness as a desert affords, only in proportion as this benign temper prevails among them. It is one thing to dwell among our own people ; and quite another,

so to dwell among them, as that we become mutual blessings to each other—blessings to that extent, as not to induce a wish for change, in the expectation that our stock of happiness might be ultimately increased by any new society or other connexions. And may it not, in most cases, be said, that if families do not so dwell together, the blame, instead of being attributed to this or that turbulent individual, as the cause of strife, ought to be shared with those who make the complaint?

Traveller, you need not be told that nothing is perfect here ; nor, it may be presumed, need you be reminded, that as you are not so yourself, you have no reason to expect perfection in those around you. Experience proves this wilderness to be such as it has ever been represented : it is not—it cannot be your rest ; if here you seek uninterrupted repose, you shall not find it. Where then, will you roam in quest of solid, of rational pleasure ? If any where it can be found

—if it at all exist, it should be in your own tent: if at all enjoyed in perfection, it should be *at home*. Vanity, and pride, and dissipation, may seek and find their pleasures abroad; but these will leave the heart desolate. *Home*—*home* is the spot, the consecrated spot, in this wide waste, on which heart's ease and true repose must be sought.

Certainly, while here below, many are the sorrows of our homes. Notwithstanding all our efforts, we cannot entirely close our tents against those intruders; and yet, many are admitted that might easily be kept away. Could we prevail on ourselves to make an impartial estimate of our situation, compared with what we know of many of the homes around us, we might, instead of the complaints we utter, or the discontent we cherish, more frequently find reason to acknowledge, with thankfulness to our Divine Benefactor, that 'the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places, and that we have (considering in what a wilderness

we are placed) a goodly heritage.' Let us not, by our murmurings, provoke the Giver of every good we enjoy to wither our palm-trees, and to dry up our wells of water. On the contrary, wherever a right view of things prevails, we shall feel no more ambition than the Shunamite did, to obtain the favour and attract the notice of the great and powerful, or to become so ourselves ; it will be sufficient for us if, like her, we ' dwell quietly among our own people'—sufficient surely for those of her own sex, to whom she exhibits an example which some of them might do well to study ; such at least as seem disposed to forget, that the duties of *home* stand next in order to their duty to God, and that on them it devolves, and greatly depends, to render that home pleasant to their fathers, to their husbands, to their children. These are the paramount duties required of mothers, of daughters, of sisters ; and which, as they would embellish their Christian profession, they will industriously instil into

the minds of those whom they may have to train to fill these relations. These are the duties which the Bible enforces, and for the neglect of which, with all the accumulated miseries in its train, they must assuredly hereafter render an account. Happy those families, those husbands, and fathers, where such retired and domestic habits in their female associates are founded on principle; so that to the enquiry, 'Where is thy wife?' 'where is thy daughter?' they can generally reply, 'She is within the tent.'

Considered in this light, the privileges of the Christian rise above our power to estimate. He especially enjoys the company, the counsel, the prayers of his own people; of the religious society to which he is attached; and of the pastor who presides over them as their spiritual guide and director, and whose access to the Divine Majesty, to the court of heaven, (if the prayers of a righteous man avail much) may bring down blessings on a people — spiritual blessings, in value in-

initely above what any earthly monarch, or all earthly potentates united, could dispense. Nor would the poorest pilgrim we meet, labouring along the barren tracks of this wilderness, if once sensible of their value, barter these his privileges, for any thing that could be offered him. To whatever would seduce them, those who can reply with genuine contentment, whether as members of a family or of a Christian community, 'We dwell among our own people,' are privileged with the purest and the best (because the most natural) of all enjoyments; as those can witness, who are travelling towards yon heavenly land. What renders it so attractive, but that it is their father's house—their *home*? There their kindred dwell; there will all their wanderings be terminated: the restlessness of their desires will be at an end. In that home they will ever remain, without a wish to go any more out: it will be the height of happiness there, to say, 'I dwell among mine own people.'

No. XVII.

By faith, Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

HEBREWS, xi, ver. 7.

OF all the vicissitudes experienced by travellers in this wilderness, none can compare with those which are recorded of this eminent servant of God. Many make their boast of an extensive knowledge of the world; but he saw two worlds; — a world expiring, — a world reviving, and commencing a new existence. He witnessed the end of all flesh; and again, he witnessed the commencement of a new state of society. He had found the wickedness of mankind to be great, when

they were many and spread abroad in all directions over the face of the earth ; and he presently found that the same corrupt principle still existed when they were few, and that the heart of man ‘ is only evil, and that continually ;’ that neither the most awful judgments, nor the most signal mercies, are in themselves sufficient to change its evil bias, and give it holy propensities : all these things he saw ; and as he ‘ was a just man, and perfect in his generation,’ those impressive lessons produced their proper effect, and prepared him to be a fit inhabitant of that land, where vicissitudes and perils are unknown.

As neither the mighty waters of the Deluge, nor the subsequent revolutions of so many ages, have been able to obliterate the print of his footsteps, let us, fellow-traveller, in our contemplations, endeavour to follow the track, that something, if possible, may be collected therefrom, to direct our own dubious steps along the journey of life through the same

desert that he travelled so long, and on which he was safely landed, after a catastrophe more dire in its consequences than has ever been witnessed by any of his countless posterity.

The first circumstance on record of this eminent character is, that he lived in the midst of those whose manners were utterly depraved, and their conduct flagitiously wicked. Had there been a neighbour or friend of congenial principles and habits, he would have found in the hospitable ark an asylum: but what piety existed in the world was exclusively confined to this one family; and surrounded as they were by examples of the most flagrant wickedness, it reflects no little honour upon those of the younger branches of it, on whom the prophetic blessing was afterwards bestowed: a circumstance from which a profitable lesson may be derived by those who are ill disposed to receive parental instruction, and who, while enjoying the means best adapted to promote their highest interests, still re-

main as incorrigible and as far from real holiness, whatever their external conduct may be, as those sinners of the old world, who then were deaf to instruction. Let not such persons gaze on the bow in the cloud, while they remain in their present state: the heavens exhibit no propitious sign or token that can inspire them with comfort or with hope; their conduct tends, so far as their influence goes, to increase the desolation of this wilderness; and they must expect only such joys as its arid soil can produce.

Tossed about on the mighty flood during so many tedious months, with what different emotions must so long a confinement be regarded, according to the diversity of the tempers and dispositions of those who endured it together in the ark, and the habits they had contracted while they were inhabitants of the former world. Noah, even in his day, might have been unable to prevent some of his family at least from forming friendships and contracting intimacies, which his

more mature judgment and experience must have disapproved. Well ; now they are convinced, or might be convinced of the wisdom of his remonstrances ; now they feel the advantage of being allied to a good man, whether or not they are such themselves. Nothing, however, is left on record concerning this family during their confinement : we only know that ‘ the Lord shut them in ;’ and that signal instance of divine favour, and pledge of fatherly care, would have been sufficient, one would think, to impress their minds not only with a feeling of gratitude, and of humble dependence upon their Divine Protector, but with every tender and sympathetic feeling towards each other. Whether their peculiar circumstances operated thus kindly on this household, can never be known ; but there are many of their descendants as effectually hedged in and confined together on some spot in this wilderness, selected for them by Divine Providence, as was this family by the mighty waters of the flood. O that

they were all submissive under that dispensation which thus orders their lot, and fixes the bounds of their dwellings! that they could all contentedly remain in their tents, while the pillar and the cloud rests upon them, whether it be for days, or weeks, or months, or years!

What a speck did this floating asylum appear on the wide expanse of water: yet what stupendous events were concealed in their germ within this narrow compass! Empires in embryo, with all the diversity of calamities, and the vicissitudes that empires know! Could a human eye have descried it from afar, of what little importance would it have appeared! Yet He who directed every dashing wave which seemed to be rolling on at random, and thus steered them to their destined course; He who sees the end from the beginning, had all these complicated events present to his view, and familiarly knew all, whether relating to empires or to the individuals who compose them. Afflicted traveller, do you complain that

‘all his waves and his billows are gone over you;’ that ‘the floods lift up their voice; that they lift up their waves?’ Your small concerns were then as intimately known, your future destiny as familiar to the Divine Mind, as was the present condition of those your progenitors. . . Imitate this antient patriarch in your faith, and ‘the water-flood shall not overflow you, neither shall the deeps swallow you up.’ Do the messengers you send abroad for tidings of relief find no spot on which to rest? Be not discouraged; for although the waters as yet conceal the topmost branches of the olive-tree, they still may be imperceptibly abating, and, ere you are aware, a leaf may be brought you as a pledge of speedy deliverance.

The mountains of Ararat — were their sides verdant or barren? Whatever they were, they must have been the most welcome spots on which this family had ever yet set their feet. Perhaps, in former days, they would have attracted but little of their notice; much less might they

have desired to clamber up their steep sides for the purpose of gaining the lofty summits, that they might gaze around : for then they were familiar with busy towns and populous cities ; with mighty heroes who were of old men of renown ; but alas ! the works and the very names of these men of renown have perished in the ruin that has swept over the wilderness, and now not a memorial of them bestrews the desolate plains. These costly monuments of the age in which they lived, and which served to embellish the wilderness in which they were then travellers, undermined by the destructive torrent, have yielded to the mighty ruin, and silence and desolation reign around. But when the fluctuating movements of the ark had announced to its anxious inhabitants that it was alighting on a resting place, the mountain top seemed clothed with verdure ; hope sprung up spontaneously, and bedecked all around in the gay vestments of spring. So are our views frequently changed by afflic-

tion. In prosperity we are prone to call 'good evil, and evil good;' but adversity changes the aspect of the scene, and frequently shows us that those things, on which heretofore we set but little value, possess intrinsic worth, and are capable of contributing essentially to our comfort and well being.

And now they descend the mountain sides, to seek an eligible spot in this wide wilderness, on which to pitch their tents. They might freely take their choice: the land lay before them; there was none to dispute their rights, or fix their limits. Now some of them, perhaps, might have been disposed to yield up those claims for which, before, they had so obstinately contended — for the privilege of again enjoying society and being enlivened by the busy scenes around: but all is hushed; contention and rapine have forgotten their arts; the oppressor and the oppressed sleep together. Ah! ye three sons of this man of God, ye who are to replenish this desolate wilderness, in compassion

to the countless millions who are yet to traverse it take heed to your own ways, and as far as your influence extends, make it blossom as the rose by your virtues: considering yourselves as the forerunners of the human race, let your eye penetrate the remote distance, and pursue an even track; so that when you have taken your flight, and for ever bid adieu to this wilderness, they may steadily follow the footsteps of their forefathers, who will then be inheriting the early promises, on which they had rested all their hopes. Surely the bow in the cloud, and the benign sound of a patriarch's voice blessing his sons, are in sweet harmony, and afford a happy presage. We delight to dwell on the subject: 'Blessed be the Lord God of Shem;' 'blessed be the Lord God of Japhet; and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.' Here was prosperity, and brotherly union as the basis of it, ultimately promised; but, alas! the original pollution which man had contracted, and which overspread the former world, has not

been cleansed by the waters of the deluge. A father's blessing is ushered in by a father's curse! O! were children sufficiently aware of the stupendous consequences often annexed to parental displeasure, how would it promote the peace and prosperity of families, and of course the general happiness of society. Duty to parents is 'the first commandment with promise;' a commandment which is exceeding broad, embracing that deference and respect, which in numerous instances seems to be utterly forgotten. Whether it will not suffice for children to conceal the failings of parents from the world in general, but that they are required if possible to hide them from each other, let the history of these three sons decide. That the punishment due to a breach of these duties is not delayed to a future state, is seen in innumerable instances. And can there be found a stronger confirmation of this sentiment, than in the subsequent destiny of those three families? Let Afric's groaning sons

attest the truth of it: let every rebellious son who 'despiseth his father, and chaseth away his mother,' contemplate this standing example of divine displeasure: let them read over the blessings annexed to filial duty, the curses threatened to disobedience, and let them tremble.

But it was not in the prospect of approaching dissolution, that the patriarch thus predicted what should befall his family in the latter days. Three hundred and fifty years were yet to be added to the days of his pilgrimage: what a long period in addition to that in which he had been travelling in the old world! what vicissitudes in common with his contemporaries must he have witnessed! 'He was an old man and full of days,' rich in experience, and in wisdom. Probably there were many in that day, who, presuming on a life equally protracted, 'gave themselves up to work iniquity with greediness,' putting death, and all its awful consequences, far from their

thoughts ; but the nine hundred and fifty years of Noah's life had their termination ; and himself and his sons, and all that generation are passed away, as many succeeding generations have done, and have mouldered in the dust for ages.— And yet, youthful traveller, you presume on the seven short stages of human life curtailed as it now is ! Alas ! the probability is, that the days of your pilgrimage will be terminated ere you have arrived at the last stage ; or, should you be indulged according to your wishes, what, think you, will be your view of life on approaching the confines of this wilderness ? ‘ It is like a tale that is told, a watch in the night.’ Ah ! then, stop in your joyful career, and contemplate the final issue. The subject of our meditations was privileged to traverse this wilderness nine hundred and fifty years ; and what then ?—he died !

No. XVIII.

And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-hattavah, ye provoked the Lord to wrath.

DEUTERONOMY, chap. ix, ver. 22.

THERE are comparatively few, the events of whose lives, were they recorded, would afford sufficient interest to be deemed by a stranger worthy the perusal; yet there are none who might not derive important advantage from an impartial biography of themselves. But where no such annals are in possession, memory might prove a sufficient substitute, when enlisted in the important work of retrospection, and might exhibit past conduct in such a light as would prove of inestimable advantage in relation to the future; especially when those feelings and impulses in which that conduct originated have subsided, and those once powerful incitements have

passed away. Actions, in themselves important only as they may be connected with remote consequences, and with the feelings and temper from which they emanated, might be thus very advantageously brought to light, and set before the mind, stripped of the disguise they originally wore.

By thus retracing our steps, every spot on which we have pitched our tents might furnish us with an important lesson. We might be reminded, like that stiff-necked and rebellious people of old, that at such and such a place, and under such and such circumstances, we also had provoked the Lord to wrath. What countless transgressions are we chargeable with, which, because they were unheeded at the time, are now forgotten, and not the faintest impression of them remains upon our memory!

O ! traveller, where was it, and in what strait or difficulty, did you question the fatherly care of Him who had led you hitherto?—question that Almighty power,

when you said, by your unbelief and despondency ‘*Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?*’ And when he proved to you that he both could and would, was it there that you presumed to murmur at your allotted supplies, saying, ‘my soul loatheth this light bread;’ ‘give me something that thou hast not given me; let me choose for myself, and either take or leave at my pleasure.’ Or, is there no spot where, when he had given you your request, that you ‘ate, and drank and rose up to play?’ If these misdeeds are forgotten at Taberah, or at Massah, or at Kibroth-hattaavah, He assuredly has not forgotten the facts, nor the time, nor the place, nor will he fail in the due season to set them in order, and enforce them on the conscience with all their accumulated aggravations. To which of these stations is conscience most afraid to recur? Was it in early life, or more recently? Or was it at each, and at every one of them? Did you learn no wisdom? Did you take no warning by former miscarriages, evidencing thereby

a heart bent to backslide? Something like this will be the account with many, if memory is faithful and conscience performs her part. Surely, to remember all the way which the Lord hath led us in the wilderness is a very humbling task. Memory may be roused to point to spots of former sojourn, with which reflections of the most painful kind may be connected; but when the sincere penitent is industriously exploring these scenes, for the purposes of self-abasement and humiliation, and while by divine justice these sins are sought for, divine mercy has provided that they shall not be found.

Traveller, while it is your lot to sustain the heat and burden of the day, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; exposed to the howling blast or pitiless tempest; yet lift up your eyes from the parched and barren plain, and behold near you 'a refuge from the wind, a covert from the storm, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land;' an appropriate relief provided for every

diversity of evil. Let the sun's scorching rays, the howling winds, the raging tempest, drive you not from, but towards, that kindly refuge, that hospitable covert, that refreshing shade. Should your way be dubious and intricate, you are still guided by an unseen hand. Behold, He hangeth the earth upon nothing; yet it maintains its stedfastness and its regular course according to his immutable decrees; and are not your tiny concerns managed by the same almighty power? 'He telleth all your wanderings,' and is assuredly leading you by a right way, however rugged and gloomy it may seem. Did you remove your tent from Taberah, and pitch it in Massah, expecting there to find repose; and did affliction still pursue you? Restless, did you pass on to Kibroth-hattaavah; and do you remain a wayworn traveller in a wilderness still? Call then to mind the sins of one station, and cease to wonder or repine at the sorrows of another. You cannot escape his hand, though you take the wings of the morn-

ing and speed your flight to the uttermost parts of the earth.

‘ Where from his presence can we stretch
The pinions of our flight ;
Or where, through nature’s spacious range,
Shall we elude his sight ?
The beams of noon, the midnight hour,
Are both alike to thee :
O may we ne’er provoke that power,
From which we cannot flee.

Yet, when divine mercy and forgiving love are found, how does the very wilderness smile and blossom as the rose ! even its sorrows do but expedite our journey. The antient Israelites, in all their wanderings, ‘ drank of that rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ :’ and from this the spiritual Israel must from station to station draw their healing supplies. Perhaps this wilderness never saw a traveller, the scenes of whose life were more diversified than were those of the Apostle Paul ; nor whose afflictions were more severe and incessant. From what quarter did they not arise ? The sea,

the land, the city, and the wilderness, false brethren, and strangers—all seemed to conspire against him: yet in the midst of all he exclaims, ‘I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.’ ‘None of these things move me, so I may win Christ, and be found in him.’ And although he earnestly desired to depart; yet he also professed himself willing to continue a painful wanderer in this inhospitable desert still, so long as any work remained for him to do. The time would fail to tell of those who have followed his footsteps from one station to another, destitute, afflicted, tormented: it is for such characters as these (if any can) to look back on the various spots of their former sojourn, with devout gratitude that they have been thus far brought through all perils on their way, and with hope that ere long the days of their mourning shall be ended. Should any painful recollections attach to Taberah, or Massah, or Kibroth-hattaavah, they look

forward to the promised land, no spot of which shall ever be distinguished but by the obedience and holiness of its inhabitants.

No. XIX.

Who is weak, and I am not weak ; who is offended and, I
burn not ?

2 CORINTHIANS, chap. xi, ver. 29.

THE illustrious character who made this amiable appeal, exhibits in the whole tenor of his apostolic labours and writings, a temper deeply imbued with the kindest feelings of our nature ; an essential ingredient this, in the disposition of those who are employed in the work of bringing that nature under the benign influences of the gospel ; which, as a message of love to our degenerate race, claims to be delivered in a strain, and to be accompanied by a conduct in harmony with itself, that is, characterized by pure affection, and tender *sympathy*.

Various and frequent are the opportunities afforded to every traveller in the

wilderness, of manifesting this temper, and of exercising those tender sympathies which are forcibly inculcated by his own wants, and feelings, and sufferings, and which are called for by the sufferings, feelings and wants of those around. These services, which have their source in the heart, it is in the power of every one to render in some degree, however confined his sphere of action, however circumscribed his means, and though in the strictest sense of the word, he should be able to say, 'silver and gold have I none.' To what an extent might not those ills be cleared away, which so bestrew our path; evils, real evils, which, because they come under the description of trifling annoyances, and amount not to serious calamities, are suffered to intrude with impunity, and often to try the temper and the patience in no small degree, even of those who may at the same time be groaning under the pressure of more weighty afflictions; and to whom, therefore, the removal or pre-

vention of these lesser annoyances would be an object well worthy the attention of the kind-hearted around them; of those especially who would sustain the character of philanthropy and christian benevolence.

Fellow-traveller, you profess to be well intentioned, and your professions are not questioned; but do your sagacity and skill in the science of human nature keep pace with these good intentions? Do you perfectly understand when, and where, and how, the numerous but indefinite services which genuine kindness of heart and pure sympathy suggest, will prove most acceptable and most solacing? And are you disposed to soothe a grief, though it may not be of that kind which has ever assailed yourself: is it enough for you, that it is a grief, a pain; and that therefore you cannot unconcernedly pass on your way, without turning aside to mitigate and assuage it? Then do you indeed perform the part of a neighbour to him whom you have found in distress.

But now, to put these kindly sympa-

thies to the test, there passes a traveller, groaning and writhing beneath a load, by no means, in your view, so ponderous and so burdensome as to warrant the heavy complaints and meanings which you hear. You think that what he calls a heavy burden, would be a light one to you ; but are you aware of the weak or wounded side on which it presses ? or can you certainly know the kind and degree of suffering which such pressure occasions ? Have you no weak side ? Is there nothing on which your own feelings are acute and irritable ? If so, go on your journey, ‘ as a strong man rejoicing in his strength ;’ but the honour of *sympathy* shall not be yours : on your head the blessing shall not alight, which the sufferer has to bestow. If *you* cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; if in no respect you are tempted as we are, gladly we turn to him who was, and who enjoins his disciples to imitate him, and to be willing always to stoop to the infirmities of his creatures,

and to alleviate and soothe the smaller, as well as the greater ills of life.

He merits no higher character than that of an empiric, who possesses but one remedy for every disease ; but the skilful physician, studying, not merely the general nature of diseases, but the various causes from which maladies of the same class may originate, varies his treatment of them accordingly : it is, however, the privilege only of a gifted few, to be so thoroughly versed, like a skilful physician, in the science of human nature, as to know how to administer the appropriate remedy adapted to every case ; how to deal with the mind under its multifarious trials and exercises, of greater or of lesser degree. But can those who are yet ignorant of themselves be expected to deal successfully with others ?

Genuine sympathy is not exclusively confined to the alleviation of suffering : while ‘ it weeps with those who weep ; it can also rejoice with those who rejoice.’ Nor does this suffice ; for although we are

certainly not required so to ' become all things to all men,' as to accommodate our tastes, and sacrifice them to theirs ; or to make their habits of thinking and their opinions a standard for our own : yet so long as they are not criminal, there is a certain kind of respect due to them, which it is in the power of every one to shew ; the intrinsic value of which can best be understood, by recurring to the instances where that kind of sympathy, or, as it may be termed, good breeding, has proved so grateful to ourselves. Whatever may be our chosen pursuit, our favourite study or amusement, those who are engaged in the same, or who at least manifest an interest therein, seem thus far to be kindred souls, and have found one avenue to the heart, from whence they will not be easily expelled. The laws of common courtesy, in unison with the pure principles of benevolence, enforce this interchange of civilities, which, under due regulations, is one of the pleasantest ingredients in the cup of life ; or rather, to change the

simile, it is one of the loveliest of the flowers that bestrew our path.

Do you observe him who is culling a sprig from the hedge-row as he passes along? It is but a hedge-row sprig, an humble weed; but he discerns somewhat in its simple form and delicate foliage to interest and to admire, and he turns his eye towards us to see if we sanction his taste, or at all participate in his feelings. Well; we will not go plodding on, so absorbed in what we deem objects of greater interest and importance, as not to slacken our pace for a moment, and deign the courteous smile he seems to invite: the sacrifice (if so it can be called) is not costly; nevertheless, the temper from which it springs, where it is not native, is not of easy acquirement; but if it cannot be ranked among the positive duties, it may fairly be classed among the chief graces and embellishments of the character.

The Apostle also had a lively resentment of the injuries inflicted on others

by their fellow-men ; and probably felt them more poignantly, than such as were aimed at himself ; quite unlike those who can calmly stand by, while themselves are unmolested, and be unconcerned spectators of the vexations and oppressions that are dealt abroad ; or who can generously dispense sage lessons on the duties of meekness, and patience, and forgiveness, ‘ laying burdens on the shoulders of others, which probably they would feel reluctant to move with one of their fingers.’ Now, the Apostle certainly did enforce these duties with his wonted energy and skill ; but in a far different spirit from that which appears in the language and conduct of such unfeeling monitors. The passage selected for the subject of this meditation sufficiently demonstrates this. For native sympathy we may, after all, be indebted merely to the peculiar and happy constitution of our bodies ; but *christian* sympathy is a divine acquirement, and when engrafted on the former, the effects are eminently

benign. Happy the individual where nature and grace thus combine to complete the character ! and happy those, too, in no inconsiderable degree, who, under the complicated ills of life, are placed by Providence in this wilderness within the sphere of such companions as these, who, if they possess not a sovereign remedy for every ill, can feel compassionately for every ill, and above all, can direct to one who does possess it ! They who have learnt of Him, how to apply a kindly balm to every wound, whether it be deep or superficial — to administer a cordial to those who are ready to faint, have the present reward of feeling their own spirits refreshed and invigorated by the kind offices they perform for others.

But, fellow-traveller, at what are you so intently gazing ? O ! I perceive yonder wayfaring man does not walk erect ; he limps in his gait : you wonder he should stumble at the pebbles which bestrew his path ; but where is your sympathy ? Perhaps, were you precisely

in his situation, he might animadvert on your walk. You look sceptical and shake your head; his case, you are persuaded, has no claim on your sympathy; but have the common feelings and infirmities of our nature no claim? Change the term *sympathy*, if you please, and substitute modesty in its place, which may suggest a hint, that you know not how soon — Ah! you are tript up! What was it that upset *you*? I cannot perceive: but stay; I must practise my own lessons: I think I should not myself have stumbled in this part of the road; but however that may be, you shall have my sympathy and my aid also, if necessary; at the same time, let me take a lesson for my own future course, that '*my* footsteps slip not.'

'Touched with a sympathy divine,
He knows our feeble frame;
He knows what sore temptations mean,
For *He* has felt the same.'

No. XX.

Who is this, that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning
upon her beloved?

CANTICLES, chap. viii, ver. 5.

Is there any thing that can give a charm to these desert wilds, or soothe the feelings of the wearied traveller, equal to the society and the tender offices of those we love? Even in the wilderness we are frequently thus indulged. He who has, for the punishment of sin, desolated this fair land, has yet left us in the solace of the heart much to cheer, to enliven, and to beguile the weariness of the way. The cases are not frequent in which lover and every friend are put far from us; in which no green spot is to be found, where we and the friend of our bosom can give and receive advice, support, and consolation. But we are prone to lean too confidently on human aid, and to trust

too implicitly to the staff of a broken reed. The worldling has no better support : attached as he is to this present state, and anxious as he is to find rest in this wilderness, he finds it not ; while those whom he despises are directed by a divine hand, and supported by an omnipotent arm. Those indeed have Him for their friend, ' who sticketh closer than a brother ;' — Him ' the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.' They are the men who, indeed, find it true, that ' two are better than one ;' and leaning upon this support, they are secured against the perils of the way, and throughout their journey hold sweet converse with their Divine Protector.

' Who is this ?' may the world well exclaim. They see not the hidden life ; they know not the firm support the pilgrim enjoys in his way to heaven, while leaning on the beloved.

' Who is this ?' may fellow-saints exclaim ; ' younger, feebler, and less weaned from the world ; who is this, that enjoys

such close communion, and walks thus with God; and who exhibits religion in its power and in its beauty?"

'Who is this,' may the Saviour say, 'who leans so firmly; who draws virtue from me so copiously? who is this, that will not let me go until I impart a blessing? I feel the firm dependence: I will save the soul that trusts in me. I honour the faith, the love, which thus lays claim to my effectual assistance.' 'Be it unto thee according to thy faith.'

'Coming up from the wilderness,' the journey is almost ended; the brighter land is in view; this separating Jordan only intervenes: on the other side are the eternal hills, the heavenly inheritance, the promised possession. Rugged are the sides of this descent, and cold are the boisterous waves. The soul may well reluctate and tremble at the prospect, and shrink from the untried scene; yet there was one who sang sweetly on this very occasion, and his song has been repeated by a countless host of triumph-

ant pilgrims : — ‘ Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death : I will fear no evil, for thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.’ ‘ Let me die the death of the righteous ; let my last end be like his.’ This, of a truth. is ‘ coming up from the wilderness, leaning on the beloved.’

‘ Who is this,’ again may the world say, ‘ that can thus courageously face the king of terrors.’ An appalling tyrant, indeed, he is to them ; at whose summons they must depart from all they held ever dear, and enter on a state untried, unknown. To see a christian take his departure out of this wilderness calmly and delightfully, is what they can never account for ; because the beloved objects on whom they have been accustomed to lean must, they know, utterly fail them at that trying season ; and of Him from whom the christian derives his support they have no knowledge ; for their language has ever been, ‘ Depart from us ; we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.’

‘Who is this,’ may the admiring church say. What a blessed sight, to see a weary pilgrim thus stedfastly persevere in his course, hoping, believing, and rejoicing to the end of his race. Though old and grey headed, yet strong in the Lord, he now leans on his beloved, and glides away into everlasting rest.

‘Ah! who is this, leaning on me at this trying hour,’ says the beloved himself. ‘Give me thy hand: I will support thee. Look not at the transient gloom that surrounds thee for a moment; but raise the eye of faith, and behold how bright is all above. One more sigh, and all suffering is for ever over. Now repose on the beloved. Saved soul! the wilderness and all its distressing scenes are past. This is Heaven!’

No. XXI.

In him there is found some good thing towards the Lord
God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam.

1 KINGS, chap. xiv, ver. 13.

OF the entire family of mankind, every one of whom is continually sustained by Almighty power and love, and hourly indebted for all he possesses and enjoys to the Divine care and beneficence, how small a portion acknowledge their obligation, or regard the Father of mercies and the Giver of every good: and among that small portion, how languid and defective is this devout principle! Yet, however mixed in the crowd, or retired and secluded from human observation; whether of high or of low degree; the All-seeing Eye is ever upon that few, marking their ways, and impartially estimating the exact degree of their attachment to Him, with all the circumstances that are favourable

or unfavourable to its existence and growth. Happy that soul, within whose bosom this genuine principle is implanted! There, although like a grain of mustard-seed, it will continue to increase and flourish, till it is fully matured, and fitted to be transplanted into a more congenial soil.

Traveller, you are toiling on: whether ascending the hill, or pacing the lowly vale, you pursue your journey heavily laden with plans, and schemes and projects, on which to erect some future imagined good: but be persuaded to examine your stuff; of what motley materials is it composed — of every shape, and of every hue! Search diligently; leave no secret corner of the receptacle unexplored. Alas! that among all your stuff there should be found no 'good thing towards the Lord God of Israel!' that most valuable of all commodities; that which only will avail at the end of your journey, when all else must be cast away as refuse, and for ever lost! How forlorn that being, thus toiling his way through a wilderness, only

intent on accumulating its unprofitable productions, when he must so shortly quit his grasp and lose his all. Into what a state of irremediable poverty will he then sink ; for should there be no ‘ good thing found in him towards the Lord God of Israel,’ much of a directly opposite nature will be discovered : all the affections of his heart are at enmity with Him ; and while there exists no good thing within, there is none without, that shall eventually operate to his advantage, even in this wilderness, and before he makes his final exit : on no spot shall he set his foot, that is not cursed for his sake, refusing to yield to him that plenteous increase, which he had anticipated as the reward of his toils.

What a contrast does this form, even to yonder traveller ; who, with all his imperfections, which he deeply deplores, has nevertheless that good thing in him, although it may be so faint and feeble, as by himself to be scarcely perceptible ; while his too eager affections for earthly

objects is glaringly manifest. With little hesitation, perhaps, he could decide of most of these objects the exact degree of estimation in which they are held by him, and what place they hold in the secret recesses of his heart. The creature he feels that he loves; but is often in much doubt and perplexity as to the Creator; especially as his God and Father in Christ.

What, then, is that good thing, which constitutes a difference so essential in its nature, so important in its consequences? Is it a regard to the true God, in opposition to idols? Certainly this is essentially requisite. Jeroboam had set up gods of gold, before which he called Israël to bow, professing still a higher regard to the one true God. This was something better than the heathen idolatry; for there was an acknowledgement of Him who made the heavens and the earth. Yet was his house cursed! And the reason is obvious: it was a worship paid, indeed, to God; but by unauthorized means: and the effect was, as it ever has been, and

ever will be, to divert the mind from the great object of all worship, and to fix it upon forms and ceremonies—upon the creature, rather than the Creator. Let us not attempt presumptuously to add to or diminish aught from the instituted modes of Divine appointment.

But if mistakes may be made in the rituals of worship, which may be offensive to God; how much more offensive must be any mistake concerning the essential mode of approaching God acceptably, which consists in our coming to him through the mediation of his appointed Messiah. ‘He that hath not the Son, hath not the Father.’ This constituted the difference between those early worshippers, Cain and Abel. The one, as a sinner, brought the lamb for a sacrifice, looking by faith to the promised deliverer; the other brought of the fruits of the ground—productions of his own rearing. There is no good thing in the heart of him who is yet unhumiliated by a sense of sin, and disregarding of the one only sacrifice.

But, supposing our creed and our ritual to be correct: is all right then? As the 'something good' was found in Abijah, it naturally directs us towards the heart: this is the seat of all true religion, be our modes of worship what they may — that religion which the publican shewed, in his distant and deep confession, and his humble application for mercy. St. Paul exhibits it, when he says, 'Let me be found in him; not having my own righteousness, which is of the law; but that which is through faith.' This indeed is 'Christ in us, the hope of glory.'

Traveller, should there be reason to hope, that this good thing is to be found in you, towards the Lord God of Israel, give the praise to him who 'maketh you to differ;' for this difference is of infinite importance. Yet rest not till the great question be satisfactorily decided, respecting its character and reality; for as to your journey, it is of little moment what track you pursue, unless it be that one, in which alone is to be found rest to your

soul. Are you one of those who, imagining you have but few sins to be forgiven, infer from thence that Divine mercy can have but few claims on your love? There have been many of this character. The two suppositions go together: but it remained for such a one as St. Paul, on the contrary, to love much; because, according to his own account, he was less than the least of all saints, and one of the chiefest of sinners. If indeed *you* are pure in heart, and also in life, subject only to the trivial frailties incident to our common nature; having but little evil, and much good: then fold your robe around you, and stalk into the temple, and offer up your solemn appeal and thanksgiving, that you are not as other men; not as yonder suppliant, who prostrate bewails that 'in him dwells no good thing;' for that 'when he would do good, evil is present with him.'

There was some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel found, even in the house of Jeroboam! O, parents! you who are sending forth your children in

all directions, to act their parts in the wilderness, reflect on this striking record. What a stigma on the memory of this degenerate house! That there should be found even one member of it, who manifested any attachment towards the Lord God of Israel, is recorded as an extraordinary circumstance; out of the common course of things; not at all to have been expected. When the plague of leprosy had infected the walls of a house, it must be rased to the foundation ere the disease could be eradicated, and the contagion arrested in its progress. This is too often seen to be the fate of families, when the heads of them have gone astray, leading their helpless children in their train. O! what a heavy account will such parents be required to render, when they shall be summoned, together with their families, to face the judgment seat! Should any good thing be found in that day in such a degenerate house, the glory, the credit, the comfort, shall not be theirs. The plants, though drooping for lack of

care, shall have survived indeed, and taken root, and flourished, till they were fit to be removed into the garden of the Lord; but such parents shall never be able to deliver up their charge with joy, saying ‘Behold us, and the children which thou hast given us.’

But, traveller, should it have been your unhappy lot to be thus abandoned by your natural guardians, presume not by these circumstances to hope that this excuse will ultimately avail you. There was some good thing found, even in the house of Jeroboam. And what was your father’s house, evil as it may have been, that there might not have been some good thing also found in you? Should there be any good thing hidden in your bosom, assuredly it is espied, and will be owned by Him, who is the discerners of the thoughts and intents of the heart; for even when wicked Ahab humbled himself, and walked softly, the immediate vengeance that was suspended over his guilty head was arrested. How much

more when the Prodigal evinced sincere contrition; even when he was yet a great way off, and when the good in him might not have attracted mortal eye, was he met by his injured father, and cordially welcomed to the paternal home. Forsake, then, erring traveller—forsake the crooked paths your ancestors have trodden; 'walk no more in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful;' lest you become like the chaff which the wind driveth away; lest you should not stand in the judgment, nor be admitted into the congregation of the righteous.

Let this subject also inspire you, (if you esteem yourself to be a christian traveller) with candour towards those whom you may feel inclined to despise or condemn. Do you suppose, that of all the crowd you behold, an individual could be selected, in whom is no good thing, no good natural quality, no one amiable disposition; or in whom, at the very worst, there might not have been

some good thing, but for circumstances with which you may be totally unacquainted? Then learn, at least, to estimate at its just value, whatever is good, if at all perceptible to human eye: it is all that in such a case belongs to you; and this is the demand of genuine charity. There is an eye which sees and regards the whole human character; all the evil as well as the good in yourself; and all the good as well as the evil in your neighbour: and for your consolation, be assured of this, that in every bosom in which there exists some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel, there dwells also some good thing, some benign feeling, towards yourself; for love to the partakers of our nature naturally emanates from love to God.

Be it our prime solicitude, to discover the hidden things of our own hearts: this will afford us little leisure or inclination to censure others, whose hearts we cannot know; in whom may be latent hopes, or fears, or struggles, which are known

only to Him, by whom they were there planted, and by whom they will one day be owned. If by their fruits we imagine ourselves furnished with a fair criterion of character, then be it our especial concern that our own fruits may be manifestly good ; that our own ' light so shine before men, that others seeing our good works, may glorify our Father who is in Heaven.' For to him alone is the praise due, whatever good thing there may be in our hearts towards ' the Lord God of Israel.'

No. XXII.

I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master,
say on.

LUKE, chap. vii, ver. 40.

THERE are many turns in the traveller's road, whichever way he is bound, and whatever track he has chosen, whether to the right hand or to the left; a voice, if he will but listen to it, accosts him at every turn: in every event and occurrence in which he is interested there is a particular lesson. It would be greatly therefore to his advantage to cherish a teachable and humble spirit, so as to be ever ready to reply to this voice of counsel, 'I will hear what God the Lord will speak:' 'Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth.'

This voice is seldom so forcibly, or so efficaciously addressed to us, as under afflictive dispensations, of whatever kind or degree they may be. Then are they

likely to produce their proper effects when in a humble and child-like spirit; we place ourselves in a posture of attention, willing to understand the full meaning of the message; and when, after every repetition of the chastisement, we still continue the obedient ear with 'Master, say on.' 'Show me wherefore it is that thou contendest with me.' 'For it is he who well observeth these things, that shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.'

Traveller, there is not a turn in your road, nor a supply during your journey; nor a resting-place, a danger, or a deliverance, in which you are not thus addressed; for 'day unto day,' with all its various events, 'uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge;' affording 'line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little.'

The Divine Benefactor too, ever intent on our well being, has also given us monitors in the persons of all with whom we have to do; for it is not exclusively from the voice of apostles and prophets,

and teachers who were expressly deputed for this purpose, that we are to gain instruction; but from a great majority of those with whom we are connected in our daily course. Not friends alone, but enemies; not superiors only, but inferiors, are frequently invested with the high office of conveying a divine message; 'whether we will hear, or whether we will forbear.' But mankind are naturally averse to reproof, through whatever medium it is conveyed, and whatever instruments are chosen for the purpose of instruction. While few scruple to join in the general acknowledgment of fallibility, and all utter with united voice, the humiliating confession, 'All we like sheep have gone astray:' yet when one of these straying sheep is arrested with the kind intention of leading it back to the fold, he generally resists, becomes restive, and bounds off again to join his wandering companions.

'All men think all men *erring* but themselves.'

O, reprover! it is at your peril that you

venture to arrest a traveller in a course that you perceive to be wrong, with, 'I have somewhat to say unto thee;' although the reproof, so far from amounting to a criminal accusation, should imply but a trivial error, or mistake in judgment. If you have long traversed this wilderness, you will ere this have discovered, that it requires a greater degree of temerity than you probably possess, to venture even thus far with very many, whom you might wish so to accost. 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend:' yet when that friend approaches to discharge this duty of true affection, it is well if human nature does not rise, and intrench itself behind self-love and self-will. Thus too often are rendered nugatory the various expedients resorted to for the guidance and direction of mankind through their perilous and intricate course: otherwise they might, much more frequently than they do, hear a voice behind them at almost every step of their journey, saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it.' But 'like the deaf adder,

they hear not the voice of the charmer, though charming never so wisely.'

Who, that has deviated from his course, and finds himself entangled in inextricable labyrinths, but must recollect a time when he has been so addressed by some warning voice, and in various ways; the full meaning of which he is now perhaps more competent to understand and to estimate duly; while at the proper season he seemed resolved to pursue his own course, although monitors on earth and monitors from heaven united to warn him of his danger.

How obdurate is the heart of man, which can even obstinately resist the awful remonstrances of the Most High! Yet 'the voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.' While proud and rebellious man standeth undismayed, 'the voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness; the voice of the Lord discovereth the forests.' But whether the God of glory thundereth, or speaketh in a still small voice by some

gentle dispensation of his providence, his creatures can turn a deaf ear, or say, 'Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.' Yet, notwithstanding these repeated provocations, when the sincere penitent thinks of those ways, and turns his feet to the divine testimonies, how far soever he may have strayed, the first plaintive cry shall be heard; for 'the Lord regards the prayer of the destitute, He will not despise their prayer.' Though *He* often calls, and we refuse to answer; yet 'when we knock it shall be opened:' when we turn and seek his face, it shall never be said that 'we sought that face in vain.' The gentle voice of the Saviour invites, with, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour, and I will give you rest.' Let our grateful ears be open to these benign invitations. It is from the cross he whispers, it is from the throne he addresses us, 'To you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men.' Let him say on: he will speak of pardoning mercy, and of sanctifying

grace; of strength for perseverance, and of a crown of glory.

He speaks especially to the traveller, when first commencing his journey. Ah! let youth be attentive; so shall they be forewarned of dangers which they do not foresee, and of means of escape which would never occur to them. Let this be their habitual language: 'Be thou the guide of my youth.' 'Let the Lord speak, and we will do it.' 'Master, say on.'

Such language would well become the aged traveller, after tedious years' labouring in the dreary way. Will not such a one be interested, when it is of his near, approaching removal, and of heaven that he hears — of deliverance from a suffering and a decaying body, and an entrance into everlasting rest; when the Redeemer invites from those mansions above with — 'Come up hither.' Then will not the longing saint, awaiting the final summons, reply to the gradual intimations of it, with 'Master, say on'?

No. XXIII.

The King spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?

DANIEL, chap. iv, ver. 30.

‘O KING, live for ever!’ for the narrow term of a mortal life, it seems, cannot suffice to yield the revenue of glory which you deem to be due to your high achievements: well would it be for the tranquillity of this wilderness world, were the temper which prompted so vain and presumptuous a boast to be found only among these great ones of the earth, and not, as is too often the case, disturbing the repose of private life, and inflating the bosoms of those who dwell beneath the humblest roofs. For although neither you nor I, traveller, possess the means of this potent monarch, to spread our fame through the

earth ; although no brazen-gated Babylon shall record our humble name ; nor do we aspire to these imposing distinctions ; yet let us not assume too much merit to ourselves, for correct feeling, or superior wisdom, while we are conscious, when we have attained those objects most in unison with our inclinations and habits, of being equally disposed to render to our own intelligence, or skill, or activity, more than, in the case of another, we should think a due portion of glory and of praise.

It is of little import, whether it be a Babylon with all its proud monuments of ambition, or some favourite structure on a much smaller scale, which we aim to pile up, till it shall tower conspicuous above those of our neighbours ; it is the same spirit which actuates, and which may be observed to run through all the gradations of society, and it is calculated to produce the same effects. It was not to the *image*, but to himself, his own will and caprice, that this proud and arbitrary

king exacted, the prostration of all his subjects. Nor need we refer to that exalted rank, or those remote times, for similar instances of tyranny and self-will. How many, within our own observation, might exhibit conspicuous figures in the page of private history, by the courage and obstinacy they display in the pursuit of their object and the maintenance of their favourite opinions. It is well for those within their immediate sphere, that their power is not so absolute as to controul all people, and make them prostrate themselves before the image (whatever it may be) which *they* have set up. As far as the power extends, we not unfrequently see it exerted, and a seven times heated resentment prepared for those who shall venture to resist the despotic requisition.

Traveller, are you clear of this folly? What is the image which *you* have set up, to which you exact deference from all around? Or where stands that Babylon of which your proud heart makes its

boast ~~in~~ Demolish it forthwith; raise it from the foundations, lest the task fall into other hands; for the enemy may be now on his march, and ere the dawning of another day, spread ruin over your fairest prospects, level your proud structures with the dust, and render all your labours abortive.

Let it be ever present in your recollection, that at its best estate, it is after all but a wilderness in which you are setting up your images and rearing your structures—a wilderness whose baneful atmosphere penetrates every retreat, and leaves no sequestered spot uncontaminated. Before you commence your labours, at least be persuaded to sit down and count the cost: seriously enquire how much of your own time and talent will be requisite to lay the foundation; how much domestic peace and comfort must be expended in rearing the superstructure: enquire of your nearest connections what sacrifices they will be required to make, that you may estimate

the matter fairly: neither forget that there is a strange disposition in those who cannot build a tower themselves, or rear a golden image, to undervalue the exertions of those who can. Are you prepared to see your Babylon thus undervalued? — to hear some Tobiah the Ammonite say, ‘If but a fox go up, he shall break down what is builded.’ Let every such laborious builder recollect, that great Babylon has long since decayed: its grandeur and magnificence are vanished. Could its proud founder seek for it again, he would seek in vain. What would be his sensations over those piles of ruins! Know, assuredly, that of whatever materials *your* Babylon is composed, the time approaches when not one stone shall be left on another: especially is your mortal structure tottering to its ruin; time is silently, although it may be slowly, undermining its foundation, and dilapidating and marring its strength every day: if its ravages are not now apparent; yet, ere long, ‘the keepers of the house *will* begin

to tremble, and the strong men to bow themselves; and the grinders will cease because they are few; and those that look out of the windows will be darkened; and the doors will be shut in the streets; and the daughters of music will be brought low.' Your towering plans will be humbled; 'for you shall be afraid of that which is high, and fear shall be in the way, and desire shall fail.' This is the inevitable catastrophe awaiting your mortal structure; for the last enemy shall level it with the dust. Proud, scheming, ambitious man, must 'go to his long home; and the mourners shall go about the streets.' Yes, some of those with whom you have been connected and familiar in these busy scenes, or who in various ways may have been employed in the execution of your designs and projects; shall now stand afar off, viewing the ruin of this mortal structure, and cry, 'Alas! alas! in one hour is thy judgment come.' 'They shall weep and mourn over you; for no man buyeth your merchandize any

more. The fruits that your souls lusted after are departed from you, and you shall find them no more at all.' *h. d. d.*

But should this 'vain-glorious' spirit prevail in our religious concerns, how bitter and fatal is the disappointment that will ensue! How many a boasting Pharisee has 'gone to his place' among the spirits of the unjust, the sensual, and the worldly, and has been greeted with the biting sarcasm, 'Art thou also become weak as we?' There were of old builders of this description, whose structures are by our Lord compared to whitened sepulchres, 'outwardly fair, but within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness:' yet there is not a more common error than this. Those whose conduct barely satisfies the claims of their fellow-men, presume to recommend themselves to the favour of God by their merits, and think to plead before him the desert of their good works; surely this is 'daubing with untempered mortar,' and rearing a building that shall not be proof

against the storm and the tempest. Had Nabubhadnezzar's own Babel fallen upon his head, the ruin would not have been so tremendous, as that which comes upon the self-righteous, when the imperfection and worthlessness of their very best performances shall be discovered by 'His laying righteousness to the line, and judgment to the plummet.' Where then will be the great Babylon, built with so much care, and surveyed with so much complacency!

May it be our happiness, fellow-traveller, to discern 'that foundation-stone which God has laid in Zion.' May we build thereon; not hay, straw, and stubble; but precious stones: 'then shall we be for ever in that city, where 'God hath appointed salvation for walls and bulwarks.'

No. XXIV.

And establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea,
the work of our hands, establish thou it.'

PSALM xc, ver. 17.

It is a lamentable truth, that the great mass of human action should be of such a character, as to prohibit this humble appeal to providence for its sanction and blessing: nevertheless, to the glory of sovereign grace, it may be stated, that there are a chosen few, who aim so to conform their actions to the divine will and pleasure, as that they can present this petition, with an humble confidence that it shall be heard and answered, so far as may be consistent with their true interests; and that no real good will be ultimately denied to their requests.

Prayer, to such persons, is a very serious business: they hesitate to aim at any object, or pursue any course, which they cannot conscientiously present at a Throne of Grace, before a heart-searching God.

It is therefore incumbent on every one to let his works, of whatever kind they may be, pass under the strictest scrutiny, before he ventures fully to adjudge that they are such as he dares to implore a blessing on them: this is the surest criterion of their real character. To every individual, as though he were the only intelligent creature in the universe, are these words solemnly addressed, — ‘I know *thy works*.’ So intimately known are they to the Divine Mind, that they will be deputed to follow him beyond the grave, whether he die in the Lord or not.

‘The work of our hands!’ Behold in what stupendous undertakings do those engage, who are but passing travellers in the wilderness. How do they labour and

toil, to establish the works of their hands ! But, while the spirit of the Babel-builders still animates them, let it, fellow-traveller, as we pass along, be your humbler aim and mine, amid our other works, to set up way-marks, from our own experience ; instructing the ignorant, and warning the incautious, by every means in our power. These will be the most durable monuments ; for they are erected with materials which shall not decay. Let us not then substitute ‘ brick for stone, and slime for mortar.’ Our hands, the servants of the head and heart, may perform much good : nevertheless, it depends on the secret motives by which the heart was influenced, to determine whether the works they perform shall be established, in that day, when every man’s work will be tried, of what kind it is. It behoves us, therefore to be solicitous, that ours shall not be added to the conflagration of a blazing world.

Traveller, permit the important question — What are the works already per-

formed by you during the various stages of your journey; especially, for instance, during the past year? So recent a period must be fresh in your memory. Was nothing during that fleeting term done, or said, which, so far from wishing it to be established, you would wish it to be unsaid—undone? Even with reference to the past week, or day, could you conscientiously offer up this petition on behalf of all your actions? Have you indeed walked in the ways of his commandments with a perfect heart? Can you appeal to those around you—those who have had the best opportunities of observing your conduct—those whose happiness is most affected by it? Can they cordially unite in the petition that your works may be established?

What works, what spiritual works have you performed? Can you wish the style of petitioning the court of heaven which you adopted yesterday, to be established as your customary mode of performing that solemn duty? What benefit do you derive

from public ordinances? Are the feelings with which you return to the world, such as your conscience approves—such as you hope He will approve, to whom the appeal should be made?

What further progress have you made in your spiritual course? Have you gained no ground; conquered no enemies; surmounted no difficulties? You know that 'the path of the just is as the shining light, shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.' Should your path be thus luminous, go on your way, and prosper; if otherwise, make a pause, and consider your ways, and whither they lead, lest He establish your works, by suffering a careless, worldly frame to degenerate into a fixed habit which shall finally lead to destruction.

What are your plans of operation for the future? Are you one of those who act but from the impulse of the present moment, without any settled plan at all? This will not do, even in your earthly concerns; for our temporal interests can

never be established, unless we 'guide our affairs with discretion;' much less may those all-important concerns, on which our eternal well-being depends, be thus managed at random, and left to hazard.

If they occupy no portion of your time or thoughts, permit the question, 'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' Behold, 'the night is fast approaching, when no man can work.' O! bestir yourself; for verily this is an important time—an eventful day! Do you enquire, what, of all days, is this day—of all times, is this time: Know, then, O lingering mortal, that *this very time* is 'the accepted time'—*this very day* is the 'day of salvation.'

Salvation! yes; that our works be well established with reference to salvation, should be the grand concern. A thousand worldly schemes may be frustrated, to our temporal, as well as to our spiritual advantage; but should our schemes for eternal happiness be laid on a wrong foundation, or carelessly built up, or left incomplete, ruin, irreparable ruin, is the

consequence. The Pharisee, and the hypocrite, the foolish virgin, and the apostate, will alike find their works destroyed, and themselves perish amid the sweeping ruin.

What works, in that great day, shall stand? Divine Mercy hath proclaimed—
'Behold I lay in Zion a foundation, a corner stone; he that believeth, and buildeth thereon, shall not make haste'—not be in hurry and confusion, when the Lord shall come; or, as St. Paul states it, 'he shall not be ashamed.'

No. XXV.

After the year was expired, at the time when kings
go forth to battle.

2 SAMUEL, chap. xi, ver. 1.

It would be no unprofitable employment, if, at the conclusion of every passing year, we were to take a deliberate and impartial survey of the various events, public and private, by which it had been distinguished; but, especially, of those in which ourselves have been concerned or implicated. Let kings and captains meditate aggression, and prepare themselves when they think fit 'to go out to war;' but we, fellow-traveller, have (or ought to have) subjects of infinitely greater moment to engage our attention, than to determine (supposing ourselves competent) to what extent such wars are

just or unjust, necessary or unnecessary : rather let us be quiet spectators of the hostile movements we may observe, far or near ; while the noise of the combat, which vibrates on our ears, only excites the responsive sigh for the sufferings of our fellow-mortals : and then, be it our principal aim to suppress all those internal emotions which tend to generate wars and fightings, and which are as inimical to the happiness of mankind, as hostile armies over-running the earth, and carrying ruin and desolation in their train. The aim of the true Christian will be, as far as in him lies, to contribute to the fulfilment of the Divine prediction, when *swords shall be turned into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks ;* and when all those milder graces of the spirit shall flourish, which characterize the children of peace.

If kings were the only persons who went out to war, the only ones armed at all points, and on the watch to see where they may advantageously invade the

peace of their neighbours, this wilderness, notwithstanding their devastations, would not wear so wild and desolate an aspect as it does; nor would travelling through it be so crowded with difficulties and perils: but in every rank we see men sallying forth in hostile attitude; determined not to yield an inch to any one, nor give place, nor turn aside; disposed to construe every inadvertent expression into an insult, and resolved to retaliate and avenge it seven-fold.

Traveller, when you encounter such turbulent, such irascible spirits, are you also ready equipped with sword and buckler? or rather is it your habitual aim, 'to live peaceably with all men?' and when baffled in these endeavours, have you learned to suffer injuries patiently, from the example and precepts of your Divine Master? If, hitherto, you have pursued your journey in tranquillity, may the God of peace further make you so perfect, in every good word and work, as that you may be proof against any future

trials of this nature that may yet assail you. In order to attain to this desirable state of mind, search diligently, whether there is any propensity in your natural temper, likely to produce an opposite conduct; be aware that every emotion of passion, or peevishness, or obstinacy, or self-will, has its origin in the same polluted source, and conducts to the same end: be admonished, therefore, should you be suffered to pursue your way till another year dawns upon your course; to suppress the first risings of these portentous emotions; and let the time past suffice, to have wrought the will of turbulent passions, from a grateful recollection of the many instances of Divine bounty which you have hitherto enjoyed, and the protecting hand by which you have been conducted in safety, amid all the perils of this last portion of your way. Be incited not to return these numerous mercies of the past year, by annoying or in any manner distressing your fellow-travellers, every one of

whom is equally with yourself an object of the Divine regard. Do you meditate evil against any individual who may have incurred your displeasure? Perhaps you only intend, on the first convenient opportunity, to inflict some petty vexation; to utter some cutting sarcasm, or smart repartee, that shall strike home; so nicely sharpened, you imagine, as that it cannot alight on its victim unfelt; and yet too trifling to be noticed by Him who observes all your ways, and thoroughly understands the full intent of your words, even before they are uttered. But what if, while you are aiming your dart, perhaps designed to wound only skin deep, the last enemy should be levelling his at your own bosom! How many, think you, have been so felled down, with some well-laid scheme ready for execution? Could you perceive such a stroke aiming at you, would it not stay your hand, and arrest its operations? and will it not stay it, although that fatal arrow should for awhile remain quiet in its quiver, to look behind

and reflect on what you have already experienced on your road ; to look before, and let that experience suggest what may reasonably be anticipated for the future ; to look on your right hand and on your left, and see if any object, past, present, or to come, can justify the commencement of an ensuing year, in any other spirit than that dictated by the gospel of peace ?

Surely, the animadversions so freely made by some private individuals, on the conduct of kings and governments, might with much greater propriety be suppressed, and their attention be turned upon themselves, and employed in checking, if not open and avowed hostility, at least those petty and indefinite assaults by which mankind contrive to torment and distress each other in their journey through this transitory life. The wanderers in this wilderness, as did those of old, are ever provoking Divine chastisement : but let not us be the willing instruments of such correction ; not the fiery flying serpents,

darting vengeance on all around. We have unavoidable enemies to encounter, and battles to fight; but the weapons we must use for those purposes are not carnal, but spiritual, for the pulling down of those strong holds.' This is the warfare which, from year to year, we are required to maintain; this that steady perseverance and inflexibility, which will not suffer us to yield, no not for an hour, to any malignant feeling; this the holy courage and ambition, and thirst for victory and for glory, at which the Christian should aim; this the warfare, the only hostility to be maintained by us, if ever we would unite with the numerous throng, who, following the Captain of their salvation, are more than conquerors, and are finally rewarded with the crown of victory.

No. XXVI.

Turn from him that he may rest, until he shall accomplish as a hireling his day.

JOB, chap. xiv, ver. 8.

THE verdant inclosure, cultivated and adorned by parental affection for the accommodation of the young traveller, is not precisely the spot likely to afford him a correct idea of the wilderness he has in future to explore. Neither are the vivid scenes portrayed by a youthful imagination at all calculated to prepare him for the realities which will soon obtrude themselves on his view ; he is not disposed to believe, that to whatever class he may belong, he is even at his very best estate but a hireling, doing the work of a master, whoever that master may be. In the one case, while he deems himself a

free agent, and subject to no controul, he is a slave and a drudge to ' the prince of the power of the air ; that spirit who worketh in the children of disobedience ;' in the other, he serves a master, whose ' yoke is easy, and his burden light.' And although the period allotted for these respective services is but a span—a speck, when compared with eternal duration ; yet is it sufficiently protracted, to afford scope for deeds, which, at a future season, will be stupendous in their consequences ; for, at that decisive season, every hireling will receive his wages, and will be ' rewarded according to his work.'

Now, respecting multitudes whom we behold, it is often too apparent in whose service they are enlisted : it is evident that the god of this world hath so blinded their eyes, that they cannot look above it for their reward ; here their hopes centre ; here terminates their ambition ; thoughtless hirelings of a vile master ! In his work they delight ; on the wages they

calculate not, till the day of reckoning arrives. Some of them we see are early arrested in their career; their labour is short, and short, too, their fleeting pleasures; while all beyond is sad disappointment, and positive misery. When thus their sun goes down at noon, they are compelled to leave their unfinished work for others to complete, who follow in the rear, and who as industriously undertake it, as though no such warning voice had solicited their attention.

These 'have accomplished their day,' their pursuits, of whatever kind, may have been followed with eagerness, or may have been so influenced by natural temper and constitution, as to incur the stigma of inertness and inactivity, by some of their more energetic fellow-travellers; yet, so long as 'the wages of sin is death,' they will be found to have performed the hireling's part, and according to the deeds done, and according to the master whose service they preferred, they will receive the hireling's reward.

There is a better Master, who invites us into his service; who addresses us by the exhortation, — ‘Why stand ye here all the day idle?’ It is a service, indeed, to which we are averse by nature; but its reward is abundant. To have body, soul, and spirit, employed for Him, is our reasonable service. Happy they, who are thus ‘in labours more abundant;’ they shall enter into the joy of their Lord, and wonder at the exceeding great reward that shall crown their feeble labours in his cause.

But, alas! where is the servant, even among those that serve that better Master, who, on a retrospect of his past life, with all its various opportunities and advantages, can make it his boast that ‘he has accomplished as a hireling his day?’ That he has punctually fulfilled the duties of every relation, faithfully discharged the trust reposed in him, and strictly accomplished the designs for which he was called into existence and placed in this state of trial. Who can

stand forward, and say, ' I have in all respects answered this, the end of my being, and have not deviated from the prescribed path in any part of my journey ? ' St. Paul, indeed, in the prospect of approaching departure, could exclaim, ' I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course ; henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of glory, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.' Yet, because he had heretofore been a persecutor, although at the time he verily thought he was doing God service by his cruelties, he elsewhere styles himself ' less than the least of all saints, and the very chiefest of sinners.' And if the traveller has, through Divine grace, been enabled to make any honourable progress in his Christian course ; yet on how many memorable occasions will he also have to bewail his failures, his frequent miscarriages, and to exclaim, because of this, and because of that sin, which rushes on his recollection, ' I also, of a truth, am less than the least of all

saints: alas! 'I have been an unprofitable servant; why have I not, long ere this, been cut down as a cumberer of the ground?' The calls to duty disregarded, the mercies rather abused than improved, and the deep afflictions lost as to spiritual benefit; these, all these, will agitate the mind with self-condemnation and anxious fears.

How should such considerations stimulate us to renewed diligence; so that, whenever required, we may be ready to render an account of our stewardship! In a wilderness like this in which we travel, none need be unemployed; there is enough to do, both within and without; therefore, 'why stand ye looking one upon another?' Rather go and procure Divine food, for yourselves and for your households, or for those by the way-side who may be perishing for lack of knowledge.

Let us also ever bear in mind, what we are exceedingly apt to forget, that our duty is commensurate with the various

relations in which we stand to each other: it is a subject which can scarcely be pressed on the attention too often, nor be too forcibly urged. It will not avail us to acquit ourselves well in that department which may happen to be the most agreeable to our taste or our humours, at the expense of other duties which may be repugnant to them. 'The commandment is exceeding broad;' much broader than many choose to admit, who make a great shew of their Christian profession, and rank high in the religious world. It embraces all with whom we are concerned; as well as every department we fill, and every period of our lives. We are *servants*; and to discharge our trust faithfully we must perform our entire work: nor need we be ignorant of any part of our duty; for the Scripture supplies us with the plainest directions. From our own servants we exact diligence, expecting that they should strictly perform all that we require them to do, and are justly displeased at their negligence or inatten-

tion; but whether our remonstrances or rebukes are effectual or not on them, they might operate to our own advantage, as illustrating the relation in which we stand, and the duties we owe to our Divine Master, which we are required to evince by our conduct to all around us.

O! that we should be inactive and supine, in a journey, and on a road, every step of which so imperiously demands all our energy; and when our Master has graciously said, to stimulate us in our work, ‘Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.’ A goodly reward!—that we who have been faithful over a few things, should be made rulers over many things. The faithful hireling does not murmur over his allotted work; but performs it with alacrity and zeal, saying, in humble imitation of his Divine Master, ‘I delight to do thy will; thy law is within my heart.’ ‘Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their master, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress,

so our eyes wait upon thee, O Lord, our God.' This humble spirit, arising from a consciousness of our being unprofitable servants, even at the best, generates that holy fear, so becoming our habitual deficiencies, and so pleasing in his sight:— 'If I be a master, where is my fear?' It consists in 'being in the fear of God all the day long.' It is a fear in perfect harmony with the love which a faithful servant bears to his master, without which the best actions are but as eye-service, and all such service the drudgery of a slave.

It is the habitual frame which constitutes a state of readiness for the coming of our Lord; 'having accomplished as hirelings our day,' and having our loins girded, our lamps burning, and tranquilly waiting till summoned from our work, whether it be 'in the morning, or at evening, or at the cock-crowing.' 'Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.'

But as the day declines, it is wise to

look around and within, and see if any part of our work has been omitted, or negligently performed, that so we may quicken our pace, and double our diligence, while as yet the master has not called us; for as we know not how soon he may come, we should be anxious lest our day should be accomplished before our allotted work is done. In most cases of indolence or negligence, there is some other concern which divides our attention, which occupies our time: whatever that is, may its claims be resisted, with ‘Let me alone, that I may accomplish as a hireling my day.’

With what pleasure does the active and faithful hireling, at the conclusion of his day of labour and toil, see the shadows begin to lengthen, and surrounding objects, those which appeared in such vivid colours in the morning, fade in the twilight: these shadows are harbingers of the rest, which wearied nature demands, ‘and there remaineth also a rest for the people of God.’ ‘They shall rest in their

beds,' and there shall come a morning also; not the morning of the hireling, who rises but to renew his labour; but the joyful morning of the resurrection, when those who, as hirelings, have faithfully accomplished this their day, shall be rewarded with 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord.'

XXVII.

Lest having preached to others, I myself should be a
cast-away.

1 CORINTHIANS, chap. ix, ver. 27.

THE deep solicitude here manifested by the Apostle, on his own account, amid his habitual anxiety and zeal for the conversion of others, affords an impressive lesson to those who are engaged in the business of instruction, and may be fairly applicable to all the gradations of teachers, from the pulpit to the nursery; from the profound moralist, who dispenses his sage maxims far and wide, and claims the homage and admiration of mankind, to the humble composer of tales and legends for the infant mind; for whoever would attempt to conduct others into the paths of virtue and happiness, should not only

have ascertained from his own experience, that the instructions he gives are sound and salutary ; but should also for his own sake, as well as for those whom he would instruct, be thoroughly aware of the various intricacies and dangers of the way ; otherwise, while attempting to extricate his charge from the gin or the snare that way-lays the feet on the one hand, he may himself slip over some precipice on the other. Moreover, should his caution and zeal be accompanied by a teachable spirit, (and where is the human being who ought not to be teachable ?) he has ample opportunity thus afforded him for self-improvement. Before the ideas accumulated, and marshalled by study, are permitted to sally forth for the benefit of others, it would be highly advantageous, first to arrest them, and on close self-inspection discover in what respects they would apply to his own case : some very simple lessons might be so applied, and be actually converted to private use ; thereby answering a double purpose, in

their instructing at once the instructor and the taught.

That this humility and teachableness characterized the spirit of the Apostle, the above passage from his writings is a proof; and it is by no means a solitary instance. And who of us shall venture to 'reprove, rebuke, or exhort' the meanest object of our notice, without instituting the humbling enquiry, in what respect the exhortation, the rebuke, or the reproof, may be applicable to our own case? — In our passage through this wilderness, we see much to blame, much to condemn; and perhaps frequently condemn and blame without sufficient cause. Let us on every occasion of the kind, first look inwards and commence a strict scrutiny there. But 'the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?' Certainly not those who are utterly regardless of its evil motions; and as it cannot be thoroughly understood even by our most diligent search, it especially behoves us

to be on our guard, lest, while we are keeping so anxious a watch over the conduct of those around us, we may, by any impropriety in our own, furnish them with the appropriate retort, ‘ Physician, heal thyself.’

Those even who are occupied in administering the first rudiments of instruction, and who find, that, to accomplish their purpose successfully, they must apply ‘ line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little;’ may discern herein an epitome of the various dispensations of Providence towards themselves, and others, in which the same process has ever been going on, the same lessons continually brought to view. If, like unteachable and refractory children, they have themselves disregarded them hitherto, it is high time such repeated instructions should now be conned over, lest after all the labour they have bestowed on the saving of others, they should themselves eventually be added to the number of the cast-away.

! Might not instructors, when dispensing rewards, and inflicting punishments on their infant charge, be forcibly reminded of the gracious promise, and the alarming threatening, which proclaim 'to the righteous, that it shall be well with him; to the wicked, that it shall be ill with him?' As 'those who serve at the altar, should live of the altar;' so should those who dispense instruction, of whatever kind, be themselves solicitous to participate in the important benefit.

O! that it should ever be said to any thus employed: 'My people shall be fed, even by you; but ye shall be hungry!' Shall it ever be, that any who, by their superior talents, activity, and zeal, have conducted souls through all the mazes of this wilderness, safe to the very borders of the promised land, should themselves be driven back with the appalling sentence, 'I never knew you;' although they might truly plead, 'Have we not taught in thy name, and cast out devils, and done many wondrous works?' O!

rueful thought! O! degraded character! to be a mere instrument in the hand of Divine wisdom, for accomplishing its designs; yet, however highly polished and tempered, and pointed, at length to be cast away as useless — a thing of no further value! Woful contrast! when the services of those whom they have instructed and trained for the higher employment of heaven will but be commencing, their own, which they estimated so highly, shall be for ever terminated — shall be remembered no more at all: ‘Verily it was on earth that they had their reward.’

Were our services to be rewarded according to their merits, this must be the sad expectation of every instructor, whether he teaches by the voice, or by the press; especially, if such endeavours were made upon the low principles of honour or emolument. It will be said to him at that day, ‘Ye did it not unto me.’

May a Divine blessing attend these humble labours, then; however low may

be their rank in literature. The writer has done what she could : may the Saviour's blood wash away the guilt ; may his righteousness cover every imperfection, and his grace accept the effort, as a tribute of love to Him. Then, while yet travelling, her heart shall rejoice amid the sorrows of the way, and contemplate, with a gleam of hope, that distant Zion, whose golden turrets glisten to the eyes of faith, and fill the pilgrim with hope, and almost with courage, even though Jordan rolls between him and the good land before him.

THE END.



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